

DRAFT VR Portion of WIOA State Plan for Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation PYs 2020 & 2021

Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation (General)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

* Sec. 102(b)(D)(iii) of WIOA

a. Input of State Rehabilitation Council

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;

The responsibilities of the Idaho State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) are outlined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

During 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 the SRCs efforts can be summarized within four broad areas: 1) strengthening the council overall; 2) providing input on IDVRs vision and mission statements as well as a strategic plan; 3) ongoing guidance on critical IDVR data gathering instrumentation; and 4) participating in sage conversations on IDVR activities.

1. SRC Member Focused Work

SRC Input

Understanding a fully staffed, well-informed SRC provides for high quality engagement within the IDVR/SRC partnership, the SRC members requested recruitment tools, updated new member orientation, and training on the role of the SRC.

A recruitment pamphlet was developed by the SRC to provide a base of understanding for potential members.

New member orientation was collaboratively updated with IDVR.

The SRC and IDVR leadership participated in a one-day training by Paul Dzedzic focused on “what VR is”, understanding WIOA, and the SRCs role, in face-to-face engagement and shoulder-to-shoulder advocacy to ensure IDVR is as strong and effective as possible to serve people with disabilities. This training was both informative and well received. Further, it led to additional conversations and actions around a renewed focus on the SRCs shoulder-to-shoulder policy and advocacy roles, as well as face-to-face opportunities to

2. SRC Structure Changes

SRC Input

To better position the SRC to move forward with shoulder-to-shoulder policy and advocacy roles as well as face-to-face engagement in the state plan’s goal and priorities; the SRC went through a thorough analysis process to restructure Council committees and subcommittees with updates to bylaws.

This training was both informative and well received. Further, it led to additional conversations and actions around a renewed focus on the SRCs shoulder-to-shoulder policy and advocacy roles, as well as face-to-face opportunities to engage in the state plan’s goals and priorities.

3. SRC National Engagement

SRC Input

Policy and advocacy work continued when an SRC member and IDVR staff attended the 2019 Spring Conference of State Administrators for Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and met with Idaho’s Congressional delegation and staff for personal stories and facts regarding the impact that IDVR has on Idaho’s citizens.

4. New Mission and Vision Statements

SRC Input

SRC provided input in on IDVR’s new Mission and new Vision statements.

5. Strategic Planning

SRC Input

SRC in concert with IDVR Executive Leadership Team, the Regional Managers, and permanent Assistant Regional Managers engaged in strategic planning session to arrive at

top three (3) strategic priorities goals and objectives for the upcoming year. It is interesting to note, in working face-to-face on this opportunity to engage in the state plan's goals and priorities, the SRC and the IDVR staff were much agreed on what rose to the level of a priority.

6. Customer Satisfaction Instrument

SRC Input

The SRC survey subcommittee, together with IDVR, expressed concerns over low return rates for the Customer Service survey. The focus was to increase response, retention, and satisfaction rates. Further, there was a need to revisit the questions, which made up the survey. The SRC was asked to take the draft survey and provide input such as retaining, modifying or eliminating items. Post question updates and changes in the survey platform both the response and retention rates increased dramatically.

7. Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

SRC Input

In anticipation of the new CSNA survey cycle, the SRC asked for an overview presentation during the council meeting. The council was provided a draft to review and asked to provide input to be incorporated into the final document.

8. Supported Employment Policy

SRC Input

The IDVR presented Supported Employment under WIOA. There were multiple questions from council members that were answered by IDVR staff.

9. Pre-Employment and Transition Services Policy

SRC Input

IDVR staff presented to the SRC on Pre-ETS and the emphasis on WIOA structure and 15% budget requirements. Further, information was provided on the variety of Pre-ETS services being provided around the state. SRC members indicated the quality and variety of services is commendable.

10. Closure and Trial Work Policies

SRC Input

The SRC Executive Committee supported the IDVR in changing the closure policy and updated the trial work policy. The changes to the closure policy were made to match RSA guidance. The SRC also assisted with rule making, which will not go into effect in 2020. Only minor changes were made to the trial work policy.

11. Subminimum Wage Policy

SRC Input

The SRC reviewed the draft Services for Individuals Employed or Seeking Employment at Subminimum Wage policy. The SRC suggested that the agency add a documentation section at the end of the policy.

2. the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and

During PYs 2017-2018 the SRC provided input and recommendations to IDVR on a variety of subjects. The following summarizes IDVR's responses to that input and recommendations.

IDVR Responses

1. SRC Member Focused Work

IDVR agreed with the SRC that an orientation would assist new and existing members. SRC training materials were provided by the SRC chair and deiminated prior to a 2- hour meeting held the afternoon prior to the full SRC Council meeting, and all members were invited to attend. The Division also contracted with Paul Dziedzic to facilitate a one-day meeting to improve collaboration.

2. SRC Member Changes

IDVR supported the Council's committees restructure.

3. SRC National Engagement

IDVR and SRC member engaged with Idaho's Congressional delegation to collaboratively share the impact that IDVR has on Idaho's citizens.

4. New Mission and Vision Statements

IDVR's new mission and vision statements better reflects the intent of the program and aligns with the dual customer and employer focus which is mandated under WIOA.

5. Strategic Planning

The Division included the SRC in a strategic planning session and included their perspective for priorities for the upcoming year. Both the SRC and IDVR have similar interests regarding the goals and priorities for the Division.

6. Customer Satisfaction Instrument

IDVR worked collaboratively with the SRC survey subcommittee to improve the overall Customer Satisfaction Survey process and instrument, which has resulted in greater survey response rate.

7. Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

The Division provided an overview of the CSNA purpose and surveys to better engage with the SRC and accepted the SRC's input on the draft report.

8. Policy Input

IDVR presented several draft policies to the SRC; Supported Employment, Pre-Employment and Transition Services, Closure and Trail work and Subminimum Wage. The Division, in general, accepted the SRC's input; adding, deleting, or amending sections to each policy.

3. the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

IDVR considers all SRC input and did not reject the SRC's input or recommendations.

b. Request for Waiver of Statewideness

When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

1. a local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request;

The Division is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

2. the designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and

The Division is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

3. All State plan requirements will apply

requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

The Division is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

c. Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System.

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) and the following entities have entered into or are developing formal agreements with programs to outline and explain the collaborative relationship between the program and IDVR. The agreements outline some or all of the following: goals, planning processes, information sharing and confidentiality, technology, accountability, service delivery support, cost sharing, annual action plans, duration, amendments, and termination/conflict resolution, when applicable.

IDVR has the following cooperative agreements:

Idaho Industrial Commission (ICC): This agreement outlines the relationship between IDVR and the ICC with regard to persons injured on the job who may also have other non-work-related injuries. The Industrial Commission will be the lead Agency for injured workers in Idaho and will refer them to IDVR when they are unable to return to previous or similar employment due to the work-related injury.

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Division of Behavioral Health, Adult Mental Health (H&W-Behavioral Health): The IDVR and H&W-Behavioral Health update this agreement annually for the purpose of better serving Idahoans experiencing severe and persistent mental illness. A team approach will be used to ensure that the Idahoans served by this agreement will benefit as to remaining de-institutionalized and successfully integrated into their respective communities from a psychological, psychosocial, and employment perspective. Those customers who have a severe and persistent mental illness deemed not eligible for this program will be referred to the general IDVR counselor. Those customers who have a severe and persistent mental illness deemed ineligible for IDVR services will be referred to other appropriate resources for assistance. A designated VR counselor and staff member are assigned to an H&W Behavioral Health Region to better serve customers. The Department of Health and Welfare provides certifiable non-federal monies for IDVR services per explained in the interagency cooperative agreement.

Reciprocal Referral Services between the two VR Programs in the State: The State of Idaho has two VR programs, the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The two programs have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish guidelines and policies to delineate the services both agencies will provide to individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, this agreement enhances cooperation and collaboration between the two agencies, improves inter-agency communication, and establishes staff cross-training opportunities.

Independent Living: IDVR is the Designated State Entity (DSE) for the Title VII Part B funds distributed by the Administration for Community Living (ACL). IDVR currently contracts and allocates a percentage of the total grant funds to the following:

- Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI) 30%

- State Independent Living Center (SILC) 30%
- Living Independence Network Corporation (LINC) 20%
- Disability Action Center – Northwest (DAC) 10%
- Living Independently for Everyone (LIFE) 10%

Part B funds are used to enhance and expand core independent living services.

Project Search: Project Search is a high school transition collaborative effort between school districts, VR, Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) and host businesses. It is an international, evidence-based model which prepares transition students identified as requiring long term supports for the world of work, thus helping them move into community employment after high school graduation. The Project Search program combines two hours of daily classroom training along with four hours of unpaid internship. These internship experiences are provided in three different eight-week rotations and can include: housekeeping, dietary, laundry, childcare, and equipment transportation. Even though the students may not be hired by the host business, they are better prepared for work and better able to access employment after Project Search completion.

Tribal VR (Nez Perce Tribe, Coeur d’Alene Tribe, Shoshone/Bannock Tribe, and Shoshone/Paiute Tribe): IDVR entered into one collaborative cooperative agreement with three of the four federally funded Tribal VR programs in the state, while also maintaining a single cooperative agreement with the fourth Tribal VR program. These revised cooperative agreements include the WIOA requirements, specifically to include address transition services to students and youth with disabilities.

The intent of these agreements is to develop and implement a cooperative system for providing vocational rehabilitation services to eligible American Indians with disabilities and to promote and enhance to the greatest extent possible vocational rehabilitation services like that of those provided by the State of Idaho. IDVR has the basic responsibility to provide rehabilitation services to all eligible customers in the State of Idaho. The Nez Perce Tribe, Coeur d’Alene Tribe, Shoshone/Paiute and Shoshone/Bannock Tribe, through a Federal Section 121 grant, will work cooperatively with IDVR.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program and IDVR: This cooperative agreement is entered into by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program (VR&E), and the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation with the purpose of ensuring seamless, coordinated, and effective vocational rehabilitation services to Idaho’s veterans with disabilities and dependents with disabilities, improving cooperation and collaboration between the two agencies, avoiding duplication of services, improving inter-agency communication, and to establish staff cross-training opportunities.

Partnership Plus (PPLUS): Partnership Plus (PPLUS): IDVR has established PPLUS agreements with four Employment Networks (EN’s) around the state. The PPLUS agreements facilitate referrals between IDVR and the EN under the Social Security Administration’s Ticket to Work program. The Agreement defines the responsibilities of each party in working with

Social Security beneficiaries (those receiving SSI/SSDI benefits). This partnership is created once the beneficiary selects an EN. A referral to the EN is made when the beneficiary is stable in their employment. This agreement establishes the basis for collaboration and coordination between the beneficiary, IDVR and the EN as the beneficiary transitions from the VR program. The EN will provide continued support on the job, i.e. benefits counseling, job retention services, and other types of ongoing support, at no cost to the beneficiary. The EN can help the beneficiary maintain or advance in employment and increase their earnings.

Idaho Department of Labor as an Employment Network: The Idaho Department of Labor (IDOL) has revised their PPLUS agreement with IDVR. American Dream Employment Network (ADEN), an administrative EN, has taken over the technical assistance and training of PPLUS for IDOL. The PPLUS agreement describes the referral process between IDVR and ADEN/IDOL under the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program authorized under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170, Title 1, Subtitle A, 42 U.S.C. 1320b-19 et seq.) and the revised regulations Social Security promulgated under 20 CFR Part 411 that took effect July 21, 2008. The Agreement further describes the responsibilities of each agency in working with Social Security beneficiaries (those receiving SSI/SSDI benefits).

Adult Corrections: The Division in collaboration with the Idaho Department of Correction (IDOC), has two Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) to provide a cooperative effort in the delivery of comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to customers who are involved with the criminal justice system. The goal of the MOAs is to provide IDVR eligible customers who are reentering the community and under felony supervision in the following service areas: Region I Coeur d'Alene, Regions III and VII Treasure Valley area, Region IV Twin Falls and Region V Pocatello area the opportunity of the full spectrum of IDVR services. IDOC will contribute certifiable non-federal funds towards the case service expenditures.

Transitioning Students with Disabilities: In collaboration with Special Education and IDEA, as well as federal initiatives, the Division has developed cooperative agreements with schools or school districts in various areas throughout the state to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to students with disabilities to assist with transition to work. A designated VR counselor and staff member are assigned to a consortium affiliated facility to better serve customers in the respective areas.

The school districts contribute certifiable non-federal funds to IDVR to be used for allowable IDVR case service expenditures per the cooperative agreement. The memoranda agreements cover the following areas of the state:

Region I Coeur d'Alene - Two Projects

Region II Lewiston - One Project

Region III Treasure Valley Special Programs - Four Projects

Region IV Twin Falls - One Project

Region V Pocatello - One Project

Region VI Idaho Falls - One Project

It is worth contrasting the services in the regions of the state covered by the cooperative agreements versus those not covered. Any individual school district may participate in the arrangement. IDVR counselors are either located in high schools or travel to those high schools participating in the project. This increases accessibility to the students eligible and/or potentially eligible for IDVR services. Counselors maintain a dedicated caseload of transitioning students and youth with disabilities until case closure. Dedicated school to work counselors collocated in schools creates closer working relationships with school personnel, provides for more timely referrals, better support throughout the rehabilitation process, and the expertise that comes with specialization. The arrangement has proved important in developing an excellent working relationship between IDVR staff and school districts across the state.

In school districts not covered by the cooperative agreements, students continue to receive the same level of service provision; however, referrals to IDVR are made by school counselors, special education teachers, or by word of mouth. All of the traditional and relevant activities and services are provided by a general caseload counselor. There are no services offered under the cooperative agreements that are not also made available by counselors providing services in the areas not covered by the cooperative agreements. The counselors who only serve students and youth typically are more knowledgeable and specialized in serving this population.

2. State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

The state program which carries out the statewide Assistive Technology program for Idaho is the Idaho Assistive Technology Project (IATP), administered by the Center on Disabilities and Human Development at the University of Idaho. IATP's goal is to increase the availability of assistive technology devices and services for older persons and Idahoans with disabilities. IDVR and IATP have had a long-term working relationship to assist IDVR customers with assistive technology services and devices, to include VR representation on the IATP Council. IDVR is in the early development stages of formalizing a cooperative agreement with IATP. The components of the cooperative agreement will include coordination and availability of services, the reciprocal referral process, and other programs and resources available through the Idaho Assistive Technology Project.

3. Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture;

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation does not engage in any programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

4. Noneducational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and

The Division does not currently have any agreements with noneducation agencies serving out-of-school youth.

5. State use contracting programs.

State Use Contracting Programs: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, created the opportunity for states to give contract preference to businesses that employ individuals with disabilities. Idaho Code Section 67-2319 appointed the “Purchasing Products of Rehabilitation Facilities” (commonly referred to as The State Use Law) to facilitate the sale of goods and services from not-for-profit Community Rehabilitation Programs to meet this obligation.

d. Coordination with Education Officials

Describe:

1. DSU's plans

The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

IDVR Pre-Employment Transition Highlights. IDVR’s Transition Coordinator has extensive experience and an established network across Idaho public K-12 education system. The Division has developed Pre-ETS implementation strategies to provide services at the following levels, including all required pre-employment transition services (job exploration counseling, work based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in postsecondary education, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living, and instruction in self-advocacy). The Division has continued to modify and improve these strategies, including the coordinated and authorized services, as service delivery and partnerships evolve. For example, The Division has developed numerous Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) with various Local Education Agencies (LEAs). These include contracting with educators to provide a Self-Advocacy curriculum for students previously developed through a partnership between the State Department of Education, IDVR, a LEA, and National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). The Division has also developed MOAs to provide students with an opportunity to participate in a paid work experience while earning summer school credit.

The Division has also improved coordinated activities by having our VR Counselors work collaboratively with local school personnel to develop effective referral and outreach strategies to maximize opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in Pre-ETS activities. These strategies also include opportunities for students who are receiving accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. VR Counselors are attending numerous IEP meetings and are working with districts to develop a better process for inviting VR counselors to IEP meetings. In addition, VR Counselors are working with districts to coordinate pre-employment transition services. VR Counselors are working with LEAs to provide career fairs, instruction in financial literacy, and career mentoring.

The Division also works the State Department of Education, the Idaho Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired, LEAs, Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs), and the Council for Developmental Disabilities to put on a Transition Institute for LEAs and VR staff. The Institute is modeled after NTACT Taxonomy for Transition Programming. The Taxonomy for Transition Programming provides solid practices identified from effective programs and evidence-based predictors of post-school success for implementing Pre-ETS and transition focused education.

This Institute allows collaborative planning between LEAs and VR. Teams discuss what transition/pre-employment transition services are available to students and what services are needed by students based on each district. Teams then create plans to help increase the necessary services for students with disabilities.

The Division has strong relationships with education agencies throughout the state, including formal interagency agreements with several Local Education Agencies (LEAs), a comprehensive formal interagency agreement which addresses collaborative service provision with the State Department of Education (SDE), and the Idaho Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI).

The Division and the SDE have developed a comprehensive formal interagency agreement which addresses collaborative service provision. This agreement specifies the programmatic and fiscal responsibilities for each agency.

Lastly, the Division has partnered with the SDE to implement a Statewide Secondary Transition Plan which correlates to the Division's Pre-Employment Transition Plan. The goal on the statewide plan is to develop systems for effective collaboration between students, families, secondary and post-secondary educators, rehabilitation counselors, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and service providers to provide quality transition activities and pre-employment transition services to students across Idaho. *The plan is detailed in section 2B.

2. Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:

A. consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;

The formal interagency agreement with the Idaho State Department of Education (SDE), the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR), and the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI) contains several provisions designed to promote communication and the sharing of technical expertise in transition planning.

The agreement stipulates that the vocational rehabilitation agency must provide consultative and technical assistance services to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including employment.

The agencies agree to:

1. Encourage staff to work closely with LEAs to ensure coordination between education services, pre-employment transition services, and vocational rehabilitation services.
2. IDVR and ICBVI counselors will provide training and information to school district personnel, students and families on pre-employment transition and vocational rehabilitation services, including their role as IEP team members.
3. IDVR and ICBVI counselors are available to consult with educators concerning pre-employment transition and vocational rehabilitation services for students to assist them toward employment.

4. IDVR and ICBVI counselors will collaborate with the LEAs in their service area to identify a process for the counselors to provide input and participate in the development of the transition services included in IEPs.
5. IDVR and/or ICBVI counselors may attend IEP team meetings for each referred student upon timely invitation by school personnel and the student and/or student's parent or legal guardian. VR counselors may attend either in person or via video or telephone. The IDVR and/or ICBVI counselors will provide written recommendations, if requested, for use in developing IEPs when unable to attend.
6. IDVR and ICBVI counselors will consult with educators concerning referral of students to IDVR and/or ICBVI for rehabilitation services, including pre-employment transition services. Students with blindness or visual impairments should be referred to ICBVI. Students with multiple disabilities may have dual cases with both IDVR and ICBVI to provide rehabilitation services.
7. IDVR and ICBVI counselors will accept referrals for pre-employment transition or vocational rehabilitation services, when appropriate, and will work collaboratively with input from the student's IEP team, for service provision and/or to develop an IPE. The vocational rehabilitation counselor, student, student's parent or legal guardian, and members of the student's IEP team will collaborate to identify required vocational rehabilitation services that will move the student towards their employment goal.

Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition:

The Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition is established by the Superintendent of Public Instruction to advise, review, analyze, and monitor the implementation of the State's Interagency Agreement on Secondary Transition. The authority to establish this Interagency Council lies in IDEA Section 640(b)(1)(A) and regulation 300.154. IDVR continues to be involved in the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition with the purpose of ensuring that students with disabilities experience a collaborative, comprehensive system that facilitates a smooth transition from secondary school to adult life. The goal of this group is to increase the number of students with disabilities who are actively engaged in postsecondary education, employment, and community activities. Interagency cooperative planning, information sharing, and the collaborative use of resources assist in accomplishing IDVR's mission at the state and local level. Members include the Idaho State Department of Education (SDE), Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR), Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI), Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind, Idaho Parents Unlimited, Council on Developmental Disabilities, Department of Labor, Boise State University, Idaho State University, The Assistive Technology Project (run through the University of Idaho), Idaho Health and Welfare, Juvenile Corrections, Department of Correction, and LEAs.

B. transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;

Statewide Transition Plan - IDVR, the State Department of Education (SDE), Idaho Parents Unlimited, Nampa School District, Lake Pend Oreille School District, and Idaho Falls School District, have developed and implemented a statewide secondary Transition Plan with support

and assistance from NTACT (National Technical Assistance Center on Transition). The goal of the plan is to develop systems for effective collaboration between students, families, secondary and post-secondary educators, rehabilitation counselors, CTE, and service providers to provide numerous transition activities and pre-employment transition services.

Expected outcomes include increased teacher knowledge of agencies and services, increased number of students receiving pre-employment transition services or needed educational transition services, increased student knowledge of agencies and other services, increased families' knowledge of agencies and services, increased collaboration with CTE, increased number of students participating in higher education or competitive employment, and provide more effective Pre-ETS based on student need.

Furthermore, the formal interagency agreement with the Idaho State Department of Education (SDE), the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR), and the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI) contains several provisions designed to facilitate the development and implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The agencies agree to cooperate in the development of transitioning students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and any relevant Individual Plan for Employment (IPEs). Development of the IEP is vested with the IEP team, including the student and his/her parent or guardian. Approval of the IPE is vested with the IDVR or ICBVI, the student and his/her parent or guardian.

C. roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;

Idaho State Department of Education (SDE) - Secondary Transition:

Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR), Idaho Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI), and the State Department of Education (SDE) agreement ensures a coordinated, comprehensive system focusing on students with disabilities as they transition from secondary school to post-school activities, promoting post-secondary education, vocational training, competitive integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation emphasizing a team approach to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from public education into employment.

This agreement addresses the following:

- Pre-Employment Transition Services
- Roles and responsibilities of each agency, including which agency is state lead
- Financial responsibilities of each agency, including the purchase of Assistive Technology
- Procedures for outreach, consultation, training, and technical assistance
- Transition planning
- Referral process for students with disabilities to the appropriate VR program
- Data release and data sharing

- Dispute resolution
- Coordination and documentation requirements under section 511
- Prohibition on entering into an arrangement with an entity holding a 14(c) special wage certificate for the purpose of operating a program where people with disabilities are engaged in work at subminimum wage.

The current agreement establishes the following roles and responsibilities for the involved parties:

The Idaho State Department of Education (SDE) agrees to:

- Assume the role of lead agency in facilitating interagency planning with LEAs and implementing educational programs and transition services for students with disabilities from high school to post-high school services.
- Support LEAs in their efforts to write IEPs using an outcome oriented focus and to coordinate transition activities for each IEP eligible student, beginning no later than the IEP created before the student turns age 16 years old (earlier if appropriate), and to address future student needs in the areas of post-secondary education, vocational training, employment, and adult living and communication participation, including assistive technology.
- Invite IDVR and/or ICBVI to provide information regarding their services, including their role as an IEP team member to school district personnel, students, and their families.
- Invite IDVR and/or ICBVI counselors, with prior consent from adult students or parents or legal guardians, as appropriate, to participate as members of IEP teams for students who have been referred to IDVR and/or ICBVI for rehabilitation services, or earlier if appropriate.
- Work with IDVR and ICBVI Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors to identify a process for such counselors to provide input and participate in the development of a student's IEP, including pre-employment transition services, when appropriate.
- Identify appropriate school personnel who, with prior consent from adult students or parents or legal guardians, as appropriate, will initiate the referral process of students receiving special education services, and students who have a 504 Plan (Rehabilitation Act of 1973), or students with disabilities (e.g., physical, medical, or visual, etc.) who are not eligible for special education services, to IDVR and/or ICBVI for pre-employment transition services and/or vocational rehabilitation services.

Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) and Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI) agree to:

- Agree to establish the age of 14 to begin working with students with disabilities.
- Encourage staff to work closely with LEAs to ensure coordination between education services, pre-employment transition services, and vocational rehabilitation services.

- IDVR and ICBVI counselors will provide training and information to school district personnel, students and families on pre-employment transition and vocational rehabilitation services, including their role as IEP team members.
- IDVR and ICBVI counselors are available to consult with educators concerning pre-employment transition and vocational rehabilitation services for students to assist them toward employment.
- IDVR and ICBVI counselors will collaborate with the LEAs in their service area to identify a process for the counselors to provide input and participate in the development of the transition services included in IEPs.
- IDVR and/or ICBVI counselors may attend IEP team meetings for each referred student upon timely invitation by school personnel and the student and/or student's parent or legal guardian. VR counselors may attend either in person or via video/telephone. The IDVR and/or ICBVI counselors will provide written recommendations, if requested, for use in developing IEPs when unable to attend.
- IDVR and ICBVI counselors will consult with educators concerning referral of students to IDVR and/or ICBVI for rehabilitation services, including pre-employment transition services. Students with blindness or visual impairments should be referred to ICBVI. Students with multiple disabilities may have dual cases with both IDVR and ICBVI to provide rehabilitation services.
- IDVR and ICBVI counselors will accept referrals for pre-employment transition or vocational rehabilitation services, when appropriate, and will work collaboratively with input from the student's IEP team, for service provision and/or to develop an IPE. The vocational rehabilitation counselor, student, student's parent or legal guardian, and members of the student's IEP team will collaborate to identify required vocational rehabilitation services that will move the student towards their employment goal.
- All Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan requirements, including Order of Selection, will apply to all services provision under this cooperative agreement.

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) agrees to:

- Continue current funding of IDVR School to Work Counselors in conjunction with matching funds from participating school districts. IDVR also ensures that in schools where School to Work Counselors are located, cooperative agreements are developed or continued between the LEA and IDVR to identify each agency's responsibilities to this partnership. The continuation and development of the IDVR/LEA School to Work Counselor positions are dependent on the receipt of adequate funding from the federal government and/or Idaho state legislature.

D. procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR), Idaho Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI), and the State Department of Education (SDE) currently have a formal cooperative agreement.

The agreement stipulates that the vocational rehabilitation agency will initiate outreach and work with the LEAs to identify potential students with disabilities who need pre-employment transition services and VR transition services for students aged 14-21. This involves informing the student, or when appropriate their parent or legal guardian, as early as possible about the vocational rehabilitation program, its purpose, eligibility criteria, application procedures, and the scope of available VR services, to include pre-employment transition services.

The Division has also participated in a series of face to face meetings in communities across Idaho including key stakeholder engagement through a series of regional special educator meetings, presenting at statewide administrator meetings, presenting at Tools for Life to parents, students, and educators, reaching out to Idaho Parents Unlimited, reaching out to the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition, and providing ongoing discussions with the Idaho State Department of Education.

The Division also developed a Transition Leadership Team. This team has members from each of the eight regions. These leaders provide outreach across the state.

Additionally, IDVR counselors have worked with educational counterparts to significantly increase the number of potentially eligible students receiving pre-employment transition services and those found eligible for the VR program.

Finally, IDVR staff, the State Department of Education, the Idaho Parents Center, Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind, WINTAC, and NTACTION worked to create a strategic plan for pre-employment transition services in Idaho. The first goal developed by the team was to increase internal (VR staff) and external (school districts, parents, students, community partners) clarity and messaging regarding VR process and how Pre-ETS fits into the overall continuum of VR services. The following action steps were created to achieve this goal:

- Create a process to address information sharing between school and VR counselors
 1. Service request form
 2. IEP
 3. 504
- Develop materials to share information about VR services with parents and schools
 1. Pre-ETS
 2. VR Services
- Options for VR Counselors to participate in the IEP process by
 1. Providing information about services
 2. Developing services to address student goals/needs
 3. Creating a timeline for initiating referral/eligibility
- Create training and materials that will increase students' understanding about the VR process and services
- Complete the internal Guidance Document regarding Pre-ETS to be used by IDVR staff

1. Accountability Measures- Outcomes for Students
 2. Develop a continuum of services reflective of Pre-ETS and Transition Services
- Create opportunities and materials to use with families to increase their understanding of expectation of work and VR Services

The second goal is to strengthen cross agency partnerships to increase collaboration in development and implementation of Transition Services. The following action steps were created to achieve this goal:

- Review and adjust data collection that will improve ability to better inform decision making
 1. Work with SDE to obtain break out of schools, # of students on IEP and 504
 2. Identify additional data points and how to use them
 3. Communicate to the VR field staff how to use the new data points
 4. Share IEPs using a new system
- Regional managers are informed and engaged in how they can support VR Counselors in providing Pre-ETS and Transition Services.
 1. Identify strategies to include Regional Managers
- Outreach strategies to rural schools are identified with steps to address student participation
- Outreach strategies identified for juvenile justice and Foster Care.

e. Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

IDVR does not establish cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers. Services are purchased on a fee for service basis. IDVR does have cooperative agreements with several nonprofit CRPs for the coordination of services provided by Employment Networks for individuals who are Social Security beneficiaries who are Ticket holders. These cooperative agreements describe the coordination between both agencies

f. Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4)). Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

IDVR is committed to the advancement of opportunities for Idaho citizens with disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, and encourages employment in the least restrictive and most integrated environments possible. IDVR has established and continues to maintain strong working relationships with pertinent state agencies such as the Department of Health and Welfare (H&W). Under H&W, Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver and Aged and Disabled Waiver are the two main extended services funding sources for Idahoans in need of Supported Employment. The third funding source is the Extended Employment Services Program. This program is funded through State appropriations only. The primary service providers for long term supports under the three main funding sources are CRPs.

If a youth with a disability has been determined to need an SE strategy and an extended service funding source is not available yet, IDVR will utilize VR funds for the required timeframes or until the funding becomes available for the long-term support.

g. Coordination with Employers

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR services; and

IDVR hired a Business Relations Liaison in 2016 to oversee the coordination of employer related outreach efforts within the Division and to coordinate employer contact under the aegis of WIOA through partnerships with Titles I-IV and other combined state plan partners.

Initial efforts illustrated additional staffing was required to advance the vision established for serving Idaho businesses. As a result, in 2017 the Business Engagement Team (BET) was created comprised of at least one-to-two IDVR staff in each regional office and activities of the BET are directed by the Business Relations Liaison. Regional Management representation is strong on the team, with three of eight RMs participating in an advisory role.

The BET has evolved a mission statement, “To intentionally create and maintain long term partnerships with businesses for mutually beneficial outcomes for employers and job seekers with disabilities”.

Following the creation of an initial charter, sponsored by Division administration, the BET has engaged in a number of preliminary activities, including the creation of a mandatory “Business Basics” online training for all staff, a method for tracking business outreach activities through our internal case management system, updates to IDVR’s external business relations portal, and development of marketing materials for business outreach and education.

Activities for the BET are partly informed by an annual survey. This survey helps the Business Relations Liaison prioritize activities based on input from the field. The latest survey indicated high perceived needs for Disability Awareness training (indicated by 68 percent of BET staff as a need), Accommodations and Assistive Technology (65 percent), and Hiring Incentives for Employers (68 percent). Additionally, the BET is now active in most of the chambers of commerce across Idaho including representation in each region of IDVR.

A toolbox for members of the BET has now been established and is growing. The toolbox features resources BET and other IDVR staff can use to promote positive employer engagement. There are tools for staff as well as a growing number of tools designed for employers including a new initiative to create a training for employers around disability etiquette. This group will be meeting early in 2020 to draft a formal strategic plan and further refine and articulate goals, strategies, priorities and staff responsibilities under the team. Expanding outreach to employers for students and youth in transition is a primary consideration for the coming year for the BET with a business engagement transition pilot for IDVR Region 1 launching in 2020.

As a part of the BET activities in PY 2018, the team led a presentation at IDVR's annual all-staff Inservice to help explain how they serve as regional resources to promote positive business engagement opportunities.

The unit, while new, has engaged in two in-depth activities with major Idaho corporations (WinCo and HP). While talks with WinCo are still preliminary, the HP Spectrum Success Program is a direct result of sustained engagement and partnership with HP and would not have been possible without the help of Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Microsoft who had engaged in some trailblazing efforts matching individuals with autism and STEM jobs. The willingness of these partners to provide technical assistance and expertise were instrumental in the program's success and as a result HP is engaging in a second cohort with IDVR beginning in early 2020.

IDVR will continue to coordinate business outreach efforts with the Idaho Department of Labor, and their business outreach team which serves as the central point of contact for WIOA coordinated business outreach activities.

IDVR's Business Relations Liaison is engaged with the National Employment Team (the NET) and attends the national conference in addition to receiving regular updates, conference calls provided through a NET community of practice. IDVR also has a working group through federal Region X (WA, OR, AK, ID) where business engagement leads from each state share best practices and approaches.

IDVR has traditionally engaged in the creation of "VR Success Stories" to showcase strong annual placements. The Business Relations Liaison and the BET have worked to overhaul, expand, and professionalize these segments and will now producing multiple success stories per Region, with two being selected for a full video production which showcases the customer and employer's success with these placements.

2. transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

Zoo Idaho worked with students who attended Academy NexT. Academy NexT is an IDVR project where students spend one week on the Idaho State University campus to participate in job exploration, career counseling, practice interview skills in a simulated environment using an

avatar, self-advocacy, independent living skills, community integration, and college life. Students learn to budget; experience college classes; learn to use technology to support note taking including the use of Livescribe pens, Chromebooks, and iPads; tour campus; and with meet disability services staff to better understand services and resources available to them.

IDVR has also coordinated with Idaho Parents Unlimited to offer the Work of Art Program. Idaho Parents Unlimited offered numerous programs to students where students work with employers to secure a job to create corporate art; Human Rights Education, Cultural Alliance, and Lineberry Orthodontics are a few examples of employers participating in this program during the last year. Students were paid minimum wage by Idaho Parents Unlimited for their work on the project. The program connected youth with disabilities to employers in the community and provided them with a meaningful employment opportunity. HP provided the students, their families, and agency partners with a reception following the experience where they could display their creations. The reception was a way to thank the students for their hard work and dedication to the project.

h. Interagency Cooperation

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

1. the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (H&W) maintains all related programs in the state including the state Medicaid program, the state Developmental Disabilities Program, and the state Mental Health program. Under Medicaid H&W operates the Idaho Home and Community Based Settings project.

IDVR has collaboratively developed a draft agreement with H&W as it relates to Title XIX of the Social Security Act. The Division anticipates signing this agreement in PY2020.

2. the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

IDVR has a solid working relationship with the Adult Developmental Disabilities Services program under the Department of H&W. There currently is no formal agreement.

3. the State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Division of Behavioral Health, Adult Mental Health (H&W-Behavioral Health):

The IDVR and H&W-Behavioral Health update this agreement annually for the purpose of better serving Idahoans experiencing severe and persistent mental illness. A team approach will be used to ensure that the Idahoans served by this agreement will benefit as to remaining de-institutionalized and successfully integrated into their respective communities from a psychological, psychosocial, and employment perspective. Those customers who have a severe and persistent mental illness deemed not eligible for this program will be referred to the general

IDVR counselor. Those customers who have a severe and persistent mental illness deemed ineligible for IDVR services will be referred to other appropriate resources for assistance. A designated VR counselor and staff member are assigned to an H&W Behavioral Health Region to better serve customers. The Department of Health and Welfare provides certifiable non-federal monies for IDVR services per explained in the interagency cooperative agreement.

i. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10)). Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

A. Qualified Personnel Needs.

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

- i. the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

Table VR.1: Qualified Personnel

Job Title	TotalPositions	CurrentVacancies	Projected VacanciesOver the Next 5 years
Qualified Rehabilitations Professionals Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Assistant Regional Managers	41	3	35
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists	26	1	16
Vocational Rehabilitation Assistants	48	0	10
Field Management Staff	8	0	2
Human Resources	2	1	0
Fiscal	5	1	1
Staff Trainer	1	0	0
Planning and Evaluation	5	0	1
Transition Coordinator	1	0	0
Business Liaison	1	0	0

Job Title	Total Positions	Current Vacancies	Projected Vacancies Over the Next 5 years
Administrative Assistants	3	0	2
Deputy Administrator	1	0	0
Administrator	1	0	0
Chief of Field Services	1	0	0

IDVR currently employs a total of 148 staff. The breakdown of personnel is listed above.

The Agency has determined that a ratio of one Qualified Rehabilitation Professional (QRP) for every 20,000 people in the state is an ideal staffing ratio. The population of Idaho is approximately 1.75 million people, thus a minimum of 87.5 QRPs over the next five years would be required to meet this ratio. IDVR currently has a total of 41 QRP (VRC & ARM) and anticipates needing 50.5 additional positions. This shortfall in part will be addressed by employing Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists with the understanding that they work toward VRC QRP status which includes the CRC designation. IDVR currently has 26 VRS positions filled leaving a shortfall of 24.5 QRP positions across Idaho. The Division does not anticipate all VRS positions will achieve QRP status, leaving the Division to supplement QRPs with VRS position in the short and intermediate term. Furthermore, numerous factors, including shifting Idaho working-age demographics and WIOA workload increases will require a reassessment of the 1 in 20,000 staffing model. In addition, one VRA position would be necessary to support the QRP to meet the demand for IDVR services. The anticipated number of vacancies expected due to retirements or individuals leaving the Agency over the next five years are noted in the above chart. Finally, the Division’s financial projections for FTE availability illustrate that we will not be able to fully staff to meet the 1:20,000 ratio to match record growth rate in Idaho. The Governor is currently focused on austerity measures to prepare for an imminent recession and will not support any increase of FTEs for non-K-20 educational programs.

Current FTE allotment has been reorganized since the 2018 plan. This includes the addition of Assistant Regional Manager position, who are CRCs and carry a caseload, a Human Resources Associate, a VRC Senior Trainer position, an Aware Specialist, and two specialized VRA positions. These positions were necessitated by WIOA changes.

Assistant Regional Managers for each our 8 regional offices were created to provide more consistent oversight and training to Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists and Vocational Rehabilitations Counselors. The goal is to provide consistent statewide training for all field staff. A Human Resources Associate was added to focus on recruitment efforts and to enhance relationships and improve recruitment efforts at Universities with Rehabilitation Counselor Education programs. The VRC Senior Training position was created to identify training needs and to design focused trainings that address requirements of WIOA for VRC and VRS positions.

The Governor’s initiative to consolidate Information Technology Services across Idaho state government agencies has substantially impacted and reduced our staff composition. With the

loss of our internal IT staff, we identified the need for an Aware Specialist position to oversee all aspects of our internal case management system, Aware. We have added two new VRA positions, one to assist the new VRC trainer and one to assist the transition coordinator position.

An evaluation of staff resulted in no increase in VR caseloads but an increase in potentially eligible student cases, thus necessitating additional support for our transition coordinator. Both new VRA positions are located at our Central Office.

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

The current vacancies broken down by personnel category can be found in Table VR.1: Qualified Personnel in the preceding section of this plan.

iii. projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

Projected vacancies by personnel category and the rationale informing these projections can be found in Table VR.1: Qualified Personnel which is located in (i)(1)(A)(i) of this section.

B. Personnel Development

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

i. a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

The University of Idaho is currently the only institution of higher education in the State that offers a VR program in Idaho. However, in 2020 the University will be sunsetting this program.

The U of I Rehabilitation Counseling Program did not have any graduates this past academic year since they accept applications for students every other year and the current cohort started Summer 2018. One student from the 2016 cohort changed to part-time and on track to graduate with the current cohort. U of I received a record number of applications for the current cohort of students and expect to have 19 graduates Spring of 2020. Several of the current students are employed full-time with IDVR. All students are registered to take the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Exam the Spring of 2020.

Idaho State University is considering and exploring the possibility of a new Master's in Counseling program which will include a track for Rehabilitation Counseling. This program is likely to move forward in 2020 and is anticipated to be offered in two Idaho locations and will accommodate 25 students. They also offer a category "R" education program for individuals who have related master's degrees and need up to six additional courses to be eligible to sit for the CRC exam.

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

iii. the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

The U of I Rehabilitation Counseling Program did not have any graduates this past academic year since they accept applications for students every other year and the current cohort started Summer 2018. One student from the 2016 cohort changed to part-time and on track to graduate with the current cohort. U of I received a record number of applications for the current cohort of students and expect to have 19 graduates Spring of 2020. All students are registered to take the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Exam the Spring of 2020. No further students will graduate as the program is ending.

2. Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

IDVR will continue to recruit qualified staff from Rehabilitation Counselor Education programs. We maintain contact with Auburn University, Hofstra University, Montana State University, New Mexico Highlands University, Portland State University, San Diego State University, University of Arizona, University of Kentucky, University of North Texas, University of Northern Colorado, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, University of Wisconsin - Stout, Utah State University, Virginia Commonwealth University, West Virginia University, and Western Washington University. Management staff also attends the Fall and Spring National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE) conferences for recruitment.

Additionally, IDVR supports paid and unpaid internships for master's level students in Rehabilitation or related fields. IDVR continues to face challenges in recruiting qualified applicants. The entry-level wage for a QRP is lower than comparable state and private positions. IDVR has increased wages for QRP's and classified personnel in PY2018. IDVR will continue to build a compensation package which will be competitive with other states and agencies contingent upon available funding.

To enhance recruitment and retention, IDVR has increased wages for QRP's and classified personnel in PY2018. IDVR will continue efforts to build a compensation package which will be competitive with other states and agencies contingent upon available funding.

Furthermore, all Regional Managers, Central Office Management and other leadership personnel are involved in recruitment activities. Development of recruitment materials and marketing plans

continue to be a priority for the Division. IDVR participates in career fairs around the state to encourage and seek individuals from diverse backgrounds including individuals with disabilities.

IDVR conducts exit interviews with staff, when possible, to determine whether there are areas of concern affecting staff retention. The current trend suggests counselors are leaving VR for positions which do not require a Master's degree and/or are paid more per hour. Recent changes in our compensation structure seem to have reduced the rate of churn for the agency, however, more time is needed to confirm the effect.

For PY 2018 the turnover rate for QRP's was 10.9 percent, down from 16.1 percent in PY 2016.

3. Personnel Standards

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and

The State of Idaho does not have a state licensure for rehabilitation counseling. IDVR's personnel standards satisfy Federal requirements as outlined in 34 CFR 361.18(c).

IDVR has established two QRP levels: Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Senior (VRC Senior). The standards that satisfy the Agency's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) policy for VRC positions are as follows:

1) A current Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) designation obtained through the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).

- Or -

2) Confirmed eligible (from CRCC) to take the exam to become a CRC.

- Or -

3) Graduation from a program accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) with a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

- Or -

4) A current Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) or Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) designation issued by the State of Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licensing (IBOL); Rules of the Idaho Licensing Board of Professional Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists, IDAPA 24.15.01.

The standard for the VRC Senior position that satisfies the Agency's CSPD policy is a current Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) designation obtained through the Commission on

Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). The LPC or LCPC designation does not meet the CSPD requirement for a VRC Senior.

Requirements to meet CSPD for staff hired at Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist (VRS) level and maintain employment eligibility include the following:

The VRS will be required to meet IDVR's CSPD standard within five years of the staff member's hire date.

1. The VRS, with assistance from Regional Manager (RM), will develop a CSPD Plan within six-months of hire date to be reviewed for approval by Human Resources.

Each CSPD plan will require the following elements:

- a. Educational requirements necessary to complete CSPD (if applicable). Number of courses required and an outline of anticipated timeframe for completion of each course.
- b. As the coursework is completed grades must be submitted to the Regional Manager and Human Resources within one month upon completion of term.
- c. Employment internship or work experience requirement necessary to complete CSPD (if applicable).
- d. Official acceptance documentation should be submitted to Regional Manager and Human Resources.
- e. Acceptance of RSA scholarship (if applicable).
- f. Estimated cost of tuition and books.
- g. Outline of timeline for completion from the university.

3. CSPD will be evaluated for progress as part of the VRS overall performance requirements as outlined in the VRS job description each year.

4. The VRS is expected to meet periodically with their manager until the CSPD plan is implemented. The manager will submit a monthly report to HR, which will provide a summary of progress.

5. Staff members at VRS level will be required to produce adequate semester progress to Human Resources for their personnel file.

When IDVR experiences a limited number of recruits for a QRP positions the agency will consider hiring individuals into the VRS classification.

IDVR requires a CRC for all Regional Manager or Assistant Region Manager positions.

IDVR will reimburse the cost of the CRCC application and testing fee upon verification of achievement of CRC certification, when funds are available.

IDVR will recognize current standards as outlined in the CRC Certification Guide when determining qualifying degrees, programs, coursework and acceptable employment experience. <http://www.crccertification.com/>.

The agency will annually review and evaluate if financial assistance can be provided to support VR Specialists (VRS) that are working towards meeting CSPD. HR will notify all VRSs at the time IDVR determines that financial assistance is available. The notification will specify the time frame and process on how to obtain the financial assistance offered.

B. the establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

IDVR is committed to providing all employees with professional development opportunities which will enhance employee job performance; support the Agency's mission, values and goals; and lead to successful employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

IDVR has established education and experience requirements for each position in the Agency with a focus on alignment of requirements contained in section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) which meet or exceed the standards required in 101(a)(7)(B)(ii)(I)-(II) including a requirement for a master's or doctoral degree in vocational rehabilitation or a related field to be recognized as a qualified rehabilitation professional at IDVR. When unable to hire VRCs, the Division supports a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist position with fewer requirements (explained under 3(a) in the preceding section, but requirements which are specifically outlined to meet the conditions of the 21st century workforce understanding.

IDVR hires with a preference for people who have experience working with people with disabilities, particularly around advocacy and providing direct support.

With the increased WIOA emphasis on workforce development the Division will also concentrate on providing training to strengthen business relationships and increase knowledge of labor market relevance and employer needs. IDVR will establish ongoing requirements to participate in continuing education around a 21st century understanding of the workforce including periodic updates on LMI and career pathways and evolving regional labor trends and expectations.

Through an increased emphasis on data-driven decisions, IDVR will increase utilization of the most recently available labor market information to best inform customer vocational decisions.

4. Staff Development.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. System of staff development

a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and

rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

IDVR tracks and monitors each employee's individual training and development. Special emphasis is placed on training in those areas of need as indented by the case file review and emerging field needs and as prioritized by the executive leadership team and the SRC. Additional priorities include training required to maintain CRC and/or LPC certification. This includes training on ethics, disability topics, vocational counseling, assessment, job placement strategies, and assistive technology.

B. Acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge

procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

An annual training needs assessment is conducted to determine personnel training needs. Individual employee skill sets, position descriptions, and position duties are also assessed to identify areas that require further development. In addition, organizational needs are analyzed to identify areas in need of succession planning, to expand those employee skills essential to provide effective services to special populations, and to meet job demands. Information gathered from employee performance evaluations; supervisory feedback, employee exit interviews, and internal monitoring results also assist the Division with identifying areas of need.

In October 2019 IDVR held a statewide in-service. Topics for our general session included Contemporary Ethics in Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Performance and Reporting. Breakout sessions included Idaho Medicaid Overview, Traumatic Brain Injury and Vocational Rehabilitation, Medical Director's Overview, Idaho's One-Stop Service Delivery System, Pre-Employment Transition Services, the Ever-Changing Landscape, Navigating the Supported Employment Labyrinth: EES and Medicaid Waiver Programs.

A four-day Motivational Interviewing (MI) training for new employees occurred on August 6-7 and September 4-5, 2019. A refresher option for current staff occurred July 30-31, 2019. Providing Motivational Interviewing training for staff continues to be an Agency priority.

Throughout the year, training requests are approved for individual and group training in areas of interest or need. A variety of platforms are utilized for dissemination, including face-to-face training, conferences, and online webinars. Topics/conferences included but were not limited to: Ethics, Idaho Conference on Alcohol and Drug Dependency, Tools for Life, counseling theories and techniques, assistive technology, Programmatic and Physical Accessibility, disability-specific trainings, and annual Rehabilitation Professionals conferences.

Succession planning and leadership development continue to be a focus for the Division. All Central Office and Field Services Managers complete a Supervisory Academy offered by the Idaho Division of Human Resources. The academy includes 10 modules on Performance Management: Development, Coaching and Feedback, Expectations, Motivation, Documentation, Calibrating Ratings, Evaluation, I-Perform (performance evaluation software program), and Progressive Discipline. When financially able the Division supports staff in the Emerging Leaders series. The Division utilizes permanent Assistant Regional Manager positions throughout the state to support succession planning and leadership development.

New VR staff participate in a new employee orientation which is provided online, by Central Office staff, the immediate supervisor, and other designated employees. New VRAs also participate in an online series designed for paraprofessional staff. The course covers the History of VR, Basic Ethical Considerations, Navigating Sticky Situations, Developing Collaborative Relationships, and Cultural Diversity.

5. Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

IDVR provides or purchases interpreter or language services required to access the program.

The Agency is currently working with the Division of Human Resources to determine a process and standards to assess staff competency in Spanish or other foreign languages. If staff meet competency standards, they may work with and interpret for customers who's primarily language is other than English.

IDVR has created a statewide counselor position for the deaf. This position will better serve individuals who are deaf and increase the overall effectiveness of our service delivery for this underserved population.

Since Idaho has a separate entity that addresses issues related to low vision and blindness, IDVR does not provide specific training to its staff in braille, but instead refers customers who require braille to the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

6. Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The Transition Coordinator will facilitate the required coordination with the State Department of Education and provision of Pre-employment Transition Services, as required under WIOA.

The Transition Coordinator has extensive knowledge of IDEA personnel qualifications, under 34 CFR 300.156. Training and education will be identified for staff regarding service provision, coordination and best practices in serving students with disabilities. The Transition Coordinator is assigned as an active member of the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition and the Special Education Advisory Panel, which promotes interagency cooperative planning, information sharing, and the collaborative use of resources at the state and local level. This Council works to ensure that training needs are adequately identified and then addressed through shared training opportunities.

Training opportunities offered by IDVR which are relevant to both educators and vocational rehabilitation professionals will be opened to school staff for participation when practicable. For

example, in the fall of 2019, IDVR brought together public educators and VR Transition staff at the Transition Institute. The Transition Coordinator facilitates monthly Transition Leadership team meetings where changes are shared with the Leadership Team. The Team takes the information from the meeting and shares it with their regions. The Transition Coordinator also provided In-Service breakout session on Pre-ETS available to all staff. The Transition Coordinator also presented at all the regional special education directors' meetings in the Fall 2019. Finally, the Transition Coordinator participates in Special Education Advisory Panel for the State Department of Education.

j. Statewide Assessment

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

1. Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:

A. with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

The number of people with disabilities in Idaho is growing. The ACS one-year estimates of individuals with disabilities in Idaho increased from 204,780 in 2014 to 224,887 in 2016, and 233,494 in 2018 representing an increase of 3.8 percent over two years, and 14 percent over the past four years (ACS Disability Characteristics, 2014, 2016 and 2018 1-Year Estimates).

According to data from the American Community Survey (2018), 13.5 percent of Idaho civilians living in the community report having a disability, including 11.6 percent of residents of working age (18–64). The prevalence of disability in Idaho roughly corresponds to that of the United States. A more extensive profile of Idahoans with Disabilities is contained in section II(a)(1)(B) Workforce Analysis portion of the combined section of this plan.

IDVR commissioned a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) beginning late summer of 2019, including an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of youth with disabilities in transition and student need for Pre-Employment Transition Services.

The independent CSNA identified the following themes in the area of needs of individuals with the significant disabilities including their need for supported employment:

- Supported Employment is a necessary service for people with the most significant disabilities and needs, which IDVR has been successfully providing for many years. Changes due to WIOA has created some challenges in implementing new practices, but overall IDVR excels in this area.
- Participants expressed that there is a need to improve the quality of employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

- Customized Employment is seen as an important employment strategy for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Training in CE has been completed in partnership with the WINTAC, but it has not been sustainable to date. Many participants indicated that they are looking forward to the implementation of CE 2.0 after IDVR revamps the training, expectations and fee structure.
- The rehabilitation needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities that were cited the most frequently (beyond SE and CE) include transportation, job skills, training, job coaching and soft skills.

Individual Survey: Barriers to Obtaining or Keeping a Job

Respondents were presented with a list of 16 barriers to obtaining employment and asked to indicate whether the item had been a barrier that impacted their ability to obtain or keep a job. The table below summarizes the most frequently stated barriers and the impact on obtaining or keeping employment.

Table X
Individual Survey Select Results: Obtaining Employment

Individual Survey: Barriers to Obtaining or Keeping a Job	Yes, has been a Barrier		Not a Barrier		Number of Times Selected
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	
Employer concerns about my ability to do the job due to my disability	593	55.3%	480	44.7%	1,073
Lack of education or training	589	53.6%	510	46.4%	1,099
Mental health concerns	478	46.3%	554	53.7%	1,032
Lack of job skills	476	44.8%	587	55.2%	1,063
Lack of job search skills	324	32.3%	679	67.7%	1,003
Lack of reasonable accommodations at work	290	29.9%	680	70.1%	970
Lack of assistive technology	232	24.2%	725	75.8%	957
Concern over loss of Social Security benefits due to working	212	22.1%	748	77.9%	960
Substance abuse	117	12.2%	839	87.8%	956

Respondents were presented with a list asking them to identify the three most significant barriers that they have faced specifically toward getting a job. This table contains a summary of the responses to the question.

Table X
Three Most Significant Barriers to Getting a Job

Three Most Significant Barriers to Getting a Job	Times identified as a barrier	Percent of Total Number of Respondents
Lack of education or training	488	43.7%
Employer concerns about my ability to do the job due to my disability	437	39.2%
Lack of job skills	358	32.1%
Mental Health concerns	319	28.6%
Lack of available jobs	286	25.6%
Criminal record	203	18.2%
Lack of job search skills	163	14.6%
Lack of reasonable accommodations at work	145	13.0%
Concern over loss of Social Security benefits due to working	137	12.3%

A total of 1,116 respondents answered the question. Lack of education or training, employer concerns about my ability to do the job, and lack of job skills were the three top items selected by respondents, matching two of the top three responses in the previous Table X. The last 5 items on this list also resemble the last five items on the list in Table X.

Individual survey respondents were asked a yes-no question asking whether they had suggestions to improve IDVR to help people with disabilities to get a job or move to a better job. There were 285 “yes” responses (23.6%) from the 1,206 respondents.

Respondents were asked a subsequent open-ended question and given the opportunity to provide suggestions on how IDVR can improve in assisting people with disabilities to get a job or move to a better job. Responses to this question that were grouped into the following themes:

1. Provide services in a timely manner
2. Improve VR counselors’ communication and customer service
3. Increase medical aspects of disability training to understand a wide variety of disabilities
4. Increase awareness of IDVR and services for customers and employers

Individual survey respondents were asked an open-ended question to provide any additional comments that they would like to share regarding IDVR services. There were 393 narrative responses. Two-hundred two comments were appreciative and positive toward IDVR services and counselors. Themes within the remaining narrative responses noted delays in communication, counselor attitudes, wait times for services, and clarification of services available.

There is a strong correlation between those individuals requiring supported employment (SE) services and presumptively eligible participants in the VR program. To approximate the potential

need for SE services, the Division will utilize counts of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries.

Individuals who qualify for SSI/SSDI are by law presumptively eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services. The United States Social Security Administration (SSA) estimates that as of December 2018 the number of Idahoans age 18-64 who received SSDI was 47,608. Social Security Administration (SSA) estimates that as of December 2018, SSI benefits were received by 26,241 individuals age 18-64 while 6,219 Idahoans concurrently received SSI and SSDI. These 73,849 individuals represent 7.2% of all working age Idahoans.

According to internal data, IDVR took applications on 4,006 cases in PY 2018 including 1,271 cases where SSI and/or SSDI benefits were verified. This represents a presumptive eligibility rate of 31.73 percent at application, an increase of 2.5 percent over FFY 2016.

B. who are minorities;

Historically, the population of Idaho has been ethnically homogenous in comparison to other states in the region. However, Idaho's recent population growth has seen an accompanying growth in the number and diversity of minority populations residing in the state, and some minority populations are experiencing double digit growth. While IDVR continues to trend to a minority service ratio of 1.00, IDVR remains committed to expanding outreach to minority populations.

The last available five-year ACS data (2018) indicates Idaho is 89.9% White with no other single race representing over 1.5 percent (Asian). Two or more races are reported by 3.0 percent of Idahoans. When considering ethnicity, Hispanic or Latino (of any race) is second with 12.7%

Idaho's population is expected to grow by on average 1.1 percent annually between 2019 to 2026:

“for both Hispanics and non-Hispanics, growth rates in Idaho are higher than the nation as a whole. However, population growth has slowed over the last five to ten years. While average annual growth rates among Idaho's Hispanics were 9.0% in 1990s, they slowed to 7.3% in the 2000s and 1.5% since 2010. At the national level, average annual growth rates among Hispanics declined from 5.6% in 1990s to 4.3% in the 2000s and 1.2% in the 2010s. While Hispanic growth has slowed, this group continues to grow faster than the non-Hispanic population.” (Hispanic Profile Data Book for Idaho, 4th Edition, 2017).

In addition to demographic information and internal case management data, IDVR remains informed on the needs of minority population through efforts which are further elaborated on in section o, the program specific section of this plan for the Division.

C. who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

According to the latest Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, the most common themes that emerged in this area based on the perceptions of respondents were:

- In general, a case can be made that individuals living in rural areas, with less access to services, support, training and education are underserved.
- Language and culture are barriers to certain populations accessing services or seeking employment, including a growing refugee population in parts of Idaho. Translation services are not readily available.

- Native American tribes live in isolated locales in Idaho with limited employment options.
- IDVR has increased outreach efforts and coordination with partner agencies; however, there is a continued need for outreach to potentially unserved populations.
- Ex-offenders with a high rate of substance abuse issues require services from multiple agencies and face resistance from the employment community.

The WIOA Advisory Group has specifically identified rural service provision a traditionally underserved area to address in II.c.1 of this plan.

The Division utilizes telephone-based translation services when necessary to bridge language barriers presented by Idaho's growing refugee population.

The outreach activities targeted toward Idaho's refugee and minority populations are detailed in section o of the program specific section of this plan for the Division.

American Indian and Alaska Native alone are estimated to represent 1.1 percent of Idahoans while IDVR provided services to this group at a rate of 4.4 percent. The latest available statistics indicate this population is overserved, however these data should be interpreted with caution as estimates of error can skew these results. The Division notes that the intersection of rural service provision and tribal affiliation can present substantial barriers to obtaining employment in these rural communities and will continue to view this population as underserved. IDVR will continue outreach efforts accordingly for this population.

The Division will continue to strengthen partnerships with entities in the workforce development system to reach populations of interest such as youth.

The Division co-locates with the Idaho Department of Correction but has ended our co-location agreement with the Idaho Department of Juvenile Correction. However, IDVR will maintain relationships with IDOC and IDJC and will continue to engage with these entities to further efforts to reach youth and adults in the corrections system across Idaho.

D. who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

The WIOA Advisory group has identified a number of core issues to tackle regarding partner collaboration and coordination of service delivery across programs (e.g. business engagement).

Meetings at the local-area level are ongoing which include all core partner agencies and numerous One-Stop partners to determine and advance strategies for common intake, reducing duplication of effort and potential increased levels of co-location. These meetings will help inform a better understanding of the needs of individuals with disabilities served by agencies external to VR in the One-Stop system. The WIOA Advisory group, in collaboration with the Workforce Development Council's One-stop Committee will engage in a series of meetings to identify common and unique strategies which are working at local-area levels. The Division engaged in the second strategic planning meeting with all WIOA Advisory group and the One-Stop Subcommittee members. The purpose of the meeting was to identify the shared strategies for this Combined State Plan.

The One-Stop Committee conducted an assessment of programmatic and physical accessibility of the two comprehensive One-Stop Centers in Idaho.

The Administrator of IDVR currently chairs the WDC's One-Stop Subcommittee.

E. who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

The percentage of Idahoans who experience disability varies significantly by age. While this variance can be attributed to several factors, in general this rate increases over time with substantial increases both early in life as congenital disabilities are initially identified, and later in life as disabilities are acquired through events or emerge due to the natural aging process. Only 5.6 percent of Idahoans aged 5-17 experience disability compared to 16.2 percent for those aged 18-64, and 36 percent of those ages 65 or more.

Idaho has a higher percentage of workers aged 24 and younger than the nation as a whole, this is historically reflected in the percentage of transition age youth served by IDVR. Students and youth under 25 represented 29.3 percent of all new cases in PY 2018.

IDVR's 2019/2020 CSNA noted several major recurring themes relating to Pre-ETS and Youth needs:

- Overall, IDVR has successfully implemented pre-employment transition services and has increased opportunities for youth with disabilities to prepare for meaningful employment. Work-based learning experiences have been a particular strength of pre-employment transition services developed through contracts across the state.
- Although the implementation of pre-employment transition services has been successful, IDVR will need to monitor the increasing demands of students, educators and families across the State to ensure that there are adequate resources available to meet the demand.
- IDVR has implemented services to meet the needs of students with the most significant disabilities. Youth with less significant disabilities (e.g., specific learning disabilities) need to have access to IDVR services, with varying levels of support to meet their specific needs. These include disability related services, training and educational opportunities and support, work readiness and job exploration skills.
- A growing number of relationships with educators have been established resulting in increased access to IDVR and other workforce system partners for students and youth. However, a continued lack of understanding and support by parents persists, indicating a need for IDVR to increase direct communication with parents and families of students and youth with disabilities.

Transition-age Youth Survey: Three Most Important Services for Obtaining and Keeping Desired Job

Respondents were provided a list of IDVR services and asked to identify the three most important services they needed to help obtain and keep the job they desired. There was no limit to the number of services respondents could choose. Table X summarizes the results.

Table X

Three Most Important Services to Help Obtain and Keep the Desired Job

Three Most Important Services to Obtain and Keep Desired Job	Number	Percent of Total
Help finding a job	156	50.6%
College education	116	37.7%
Transportation	110	35.7%
Help with employment preparation activities like writing a resume, completing an application and interviewing.	103	33.4%
Support on the job like a job coach	102	33.1%
Vocational training	86	27.9%
Affordable housing	53	17.2%
Mental health counseling	35	11.4%
Assistive technology	19	6.2%

Help finding a job, college education, and transportation were the most frequently selected items in response to the question regarding the three most important services needed to obtain and keep a desired job by transition-age survey respondents. When compared to the previous question, note that results are different college education is the top item, help finding a job ranked fourth, and transportation is in the sixth position in Table X above.

Transition-age survey respondents were asked an open-ended question regarding any other comments about the services that would help to prepare for, obtain and retain employment. Seventy-nine narrative responses were received. Three comments were positive in regard to IDVR transition services and seventeen were critical of services.

The following recommendations from IDVR’s 2019/2020 CSNA related to the needs of youth with disabilities in transition:

1. IDVR is encouraged to continue efforts to identify needs and programs for implementing pre-employment transition services. The agency should consider adding some tiered approaches that will enhance the delivery of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities that have differing functional capacities. In addition, IDVR is encouraged to develop strategies, either through direct or contracted services, to increase the delivery of pre-employment transition services to all areas of the State.
2. IDVR is encouraged to focus outreach efforts to students and youth with disabilities that are not traditionally known to IDVR through collaboration with special education services. The agency should consider increasing marketing and outreach to mainstream educators, 504 coordinators, school counselors, school nurses, and pediatric medical providers in the community. As outreach results in increased referrals and applications by

these populations, IDVR is encouraged to tailor services to meet the diverse needs of these individuals.

3. IDVR is encouraged to increase marketing, communication and expectations directed toward parents and families of youth with disabilities.
4. IDVR should consider assessing the availability of IDVR services and making them more accessible across the state, particularly in the remote areas of high concern for youth.

The Division will continue to increase our efforts to deliver services to students with disabilities in response to WIOA mandates. The Division's proposed activities to address Pre-ETS and youth is detailed in section 'o' of this plan.

2. Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

The 2019/2020 CSNA summarizes results in section 6 of the document "Need to Establish, Develop or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs in Idaho", the most common themes that emerged in this area were:

The following themes were recurring from the individuals interviewed for this assessment in the area of the need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs serving individuals with disabilities in Idaho:

1. Overall, IDVR has strong partnerships and access to CRPs in the more populous areas of the state, however provider coverage and range of available services becomes more irregular in the rural and remote areas of Idaho.
2. There were concerns about the quality and quantity of employment outcomes for IDVR consumers that receive CRP services.
3. CRP employment services were generally described as in need of improvement. There are varying perspectives on why employment services provided by CRPs are not as successful as they can be.
4. Pre-employment transition services have created additional opportunities for CRPs. This is seen as a great opportunity for all involved, but the level of quality varies. Some view contracted services versus fee for service as a practice which promotes differing outcomes.
5. Depending on the lens of those interviewed, there are a variety of CRP services needing attention or improvement. These include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Improvement in CRP evaluations to include a wider variety of community-based evaluation sites.
 - b. Concerns of conflict of interest when CRPs are recommending continued services in their program with no measurement for when success or skill levels will be achieved.
 - c. Partners of IDVR are not generally pleased with the outcomes or services provided through CRPs.

- d. There is a need for improved consistency across IDVR regions related to policy, forms and expectations of CRPs.
 - e. Participants indicated that CRPs are not clear on their role under WIOA. The learning curve has been challenging for all parties and training/communication to CRPs could improve.
 - f. Implementing fading options for IDVR participants was a positive change in services but understanding of the concept and expectations has been challenging. Additional guidance has been requested by CRPs.
 - g. Both CRPs and IDVR need training in employment opportunities in today's labor market. Use of LMI and strategies for finding non-traditional types of employment are not possible without additional training and support.
6. Largely, CRPs seem to be confused on the difference between IDVR and Extended Employment Services (EES), a separate state funded program under the Division. This appears to be an area of confusion that needs to be addressed.
- CRPs are faced with high turnover and this instability of staff affects the quality of services.
 - The perception is that low pay of many CRP staff is the major cause of turnover.
 - The quality of job coaches is highly questionable. Many have little more in the way of credentials than a high school diploma.
 - There is a need for more effective and standardized quality assurance monitoring and evaluation of CRPs.
 - CRPs have a questionable capacity to serve individuals with language barriers.
 - There is a need for increased communication between VR and CRPs to gain clarity on expectations and coordination of services.
 - CRPs should devote more time in training individuals with disabilities on life skills such as hygiene, budgeting, etc.

There are two primary areas where needs are present to establish, develop, or improve CRPs within the state of Idaho:

1. Meeting the need of emerging/novel requirements of WIOA and expanding the statewide capacity of CRPs to deliver these services with fidelity (e.g. Customized Employment, Pre-ETS and similar services to youth, Youth Extended Services).
2. Monitoring and improving Community Rehabilitation Program performance through a collaborative iterative learning process.

The continuous improvement of CRPs is an ongoing function of IDVR: The establishment, development and improvement of CRPs within the state fall under the purview of IDVR's Planning and Evaluation team. One of P&E's responsibilities within the agency is a comprehensive CRP monitoring process. This process seeks to provide an initial threshold of quality for new CRPs who wish to serve IDVR consumers, provides a maintenance function in retaining a base level quality standard, and a remediation process for CRPs who fall short of standards via a three-year site review process.

3. Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Overview

As previously mentioned earlier in section e, IDVR commissioned a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) beginning late summer of 2019, including an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of youth with disabilities in transition and student need for Pre-Employment Transition Services. Detailed information is provided in section e.

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is an agency of the Idaho State Board of Education and partners with other agencies under the Board through coordination and collaboration.

IDVR has strong relationships with Education agencies throughout the state, including formal interagency agreements with a number of Local Education Agencies (LEAs), a comprehensive formal interagency agreement which addresses collaborative service provision with the State Department of Education (SDE), and the Idaho Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI).

IDVR, ICBVI, and the SDE have developed a comprehensive formal interagency agreement which addresses collaborative service provision. This agreement specifies the programmatic and fiscal responsibilities for each agency. LEAs provide different transition services to students with disabilities for various reasons, adequate funding being one of the major reasons. Therefore, the Division needs to understand the types of transition services that are currently provided by each LEA in order to determine what Pre-ETS activities should be considered for students with disabilities at the LEA level.

As a result, that need, IDVR is coordinating with educational officials and other state agencies to provide an annual Transition Institute last held in fall of 2019. The third annual Transition Institute is scheduled for fall 2020.

Districts will bring teams, that will include a VR Counselor to the Institute to develop specific goal directed plans based on district data to improve Pre-ETS and transition focused education based on district need. This will provide IDVR with the specific criteria to determine which agency (IDVR or LEA) has primary responsibility for providing and paying for transition related services for students with disabilities as well as what additional Pre-ETS should be targeted to each LEA.

Lastly, IDVR has partnered with the SDE to implement a Statewide Secondary Transition Plan which correlates to the Division's Pre-Employment Transition Plan. The goal on the statewide plan is to develop systems for effective collaboration between students, families secondary and post-secondary educators, rehabilitation counselors, and service providers to evaluate the quality and quantity of transition activities and pre-employment transition services.

k. Annual Estimates

Describe:

1. The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services;

This estimate includes the number of the individuals in Idaho who experience disabilities, ages 16 and over who are in the labor force according to the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Table S1811, 2017) is 60,486.

2. The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

A. The VR Program;

IDVR believes it will be difficult to determine the impact of WIOA on number served without baseline data. While the Division is committed to extending services to all eligible individuals, new provisions including services to ‘potentially eligible’ groups and pre-employment transition service requirements will both (1) diminish overall funds available to individuals categorized as ‘eligible’ and (2) fundamentally shift the way IDVR spends more than 15 percent of program funds. As data become available under the new conditions of WIOA, the Division will increase its confidence in reporting these numbers.

The number of customers served by IDVR is diminishing. Historic rates of unemployment across Idaho and new mandates created by WIOA are likely factors in this recent downturn. The Division estimates serving 8,631 individuals for PY 2020 if labor market conditions persist.

The following data are the numbers of individuals served for the past three years and estimates for program years 2019 and 2020.

PY 2016 – 12,115

PY 2017 – 11,047

PY 2018 – 9,621

B. The Supported Employment Program; and

The Division expects to receive \$300,000 in Title VI Supported Employment funds. For PY 2020 the Division expects to serve approximately 750 individuals requiring SE services with an average cost of \$2,155 for a total of 1.62M based upon historical and trend data. As projected expenditures exceed Title VI funds, The Division will supplement Title VI SE services utilizing Title I VR funds. The Division does not anticipate any issues expending the \$150,000 set aside for SE services, and Extended Services to students and youth.

C. each priority category, if under an order of selection;

IDVR is not operating under an Order of Selection. IDVR will continue to monitor fiscal conditions as impacted by WIOA to determine whether or not an Order should be established and/or implemented. IDVR currently operates three-tier significance of disability scale in line with Federal D, SD, and MSD reporting guidelines.

3. The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

N/A

4. The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

IDVR has seen service volumes diminish while service costs per customer continue to increase. This increase in cost, coupled with the redistribution of funds for Pre-ETS could accelerate the need to implement an Order of Selection in Idaho.

Annual Estimate of Individuals to Be Served and Cost of Services: The estimated number of all customers who are eligible for services under this State Plan: 6,800. IDVR is not in an order of selection.

Table VR.2: Annual Estimate of Individuals to Be Served and Cost of Services

Category	Title I or Title VI Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services
Title I Part B	\$7,284,200	6,050	\$1,204
Title VI Part B	\$1,616,250	750	\$2,155
Totals	\$8,900,450	6,800	\$2,261

I. State Goals and Priorities

The designated State unit must:

1. Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed

Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

IDVR and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) revised/modified the goals and priorities based on the recently completed Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). New program goals and priorities reflect and align with program changes resulting from WIOA, the results from the latest CSNA, and the goals and strategies of the combined state plan.

IDVR, in collaboration with the SRC, will continue to develop specific strategies that are in alignment with these goals and priorities.

2. Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.

The goals and priorities for the Division are reviewed annually and revised as necessary based on input from a variety of sources including the SRC, combined plan partners, the State Independent Living Council (SILC), the Client Advocacy Program (CAP), Tribal VR representatives, findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under Section 107, and the IDVR management team, including management at the regional level. Additionally, the goals and priorities are informed by the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) which is conducted every three years.

Goal 1 - Provide quality, relevant, individualized vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to maximize their career potential

Priority 1 - Expand, monitor, and improve pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities and similar services to youth.

Priority 2 - Provide a comprehensive array of services to individuals with disabilities, including individuals with Most Significant Disabilities (MSD).

Priority 3 - Hire and retain qualified staff to deliver quality vocational rehabilitation services.

Priority 4 - Improve usage of Labor Market Information/Career Pathways to inform customer career choice.

Priority 5 - Improve overall quality of CRP services.

Goal 2 - Improve VR program efficiency through continuous quality improvement activities

Priority 1 - Meet or exceed negotiated targets on Primary Performance Indicators 1-6 established by the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Priority 2 - Monitor IDVR's Customer Satisfaction Survey in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council and work together on strategies to increase the overall satisfaction rate.

Priority 3 - Maximize the utilization of comparable benefits.

Priority 4 – Continue efforts to align IDVR activities with the workforce development system.

Priority 5 - Evaluate IDVR assessment expenditures.

Priority 6 – Continue the implementation of a monitoring strategy which is adaptive to changing risk conditions, aligns with WIOA requirements, and meaningfully informs the continuous quality improvement cycle.

Priority 7 - Evaluate customer access to and timeliness of services.

Goal 3 – Improve outreach and services to IDVR business customers

Priority 1 – Increase business utilization of IDVR expertise and services.

3. Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

Discussion of how the goals and priorities were informed by an analysis of the following areas are broken down in the subsequent content area subdivisions:

A. The most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;

IDVR commissioned a CSNA in Summer 2019 which includes an assessment of Pre-ETS and youth need as well as considering the needs of business.

The Division's goals and priorities reflect those areas where the Division plans to focus efforts for improvement and are directly informed by the CSNA. The Division worked closely with Idaho's State Rehabilitation Council using the results of the latest Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and have updated these goals and priorities with language that meets the direction provided by the SRC.

B. the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and

Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation programs are using a phased-in approach to set levels of performance for all primary performance indicators under this Combined State Plan. RSA-TAC-18-01 released January 18, 2018 provides guidance on the requirements for these indicators. The Division is still collecting baseline information on most of these indicators. As a result, performance levels are being reported for only Measurable Skill Gains at this time. The remaining indicators will be coming online in the next two years and IDVR anticipates being able to report performance across all indicators in the next plan:

- Employment in the 2nd quarter
- Employment in the 4th quarter
- Median earnings
- Credential attainment
- Measurable skill gains
- Effectiveness in serving employers.

The Division has updated our data sharing agreement, including signing the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) Agreement as a non-access PACIA. While, IDVR has requested access to Idaho's Data Management Council to gain access to Idaho's Statewide Longitudinal Data System, the current data exchange environment does not allow for this information to be exchanged in time for reporting purposes. The Division is working closely with other core WIOA partners on a Workforce Development Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant which seeks to remove barriers through automation and reduce the time required to access this data.

The Division continues to improve our data validation and accuracy efforts by working with Aware, testing data validation and accuracy checks with the field and implementing strategies which provide strong automatic internal control and quarterly data check to detect anomalies and

errors. The Division's Information and Communication strategy promote compliance and learning by informing staff each quarter of errors and anomalies detected by this strategy and working with staff to fix errors and fix or certify anomalies. The expectation is that errors and anomalies for staff working through these corrections will diminish over time.

The Division will continue to collect and analyze data to inform initial baseline thresholds to establish levels of performance to use for future negotiations with RSA. Thusly, the Division looks forward to negotiating targets with RSA.

C. other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

The Division has worked closely with RSA on their data dashboard information and utilizes the dashboard to identify and fix inaccuracies in the data collection process and for performance improvement.

IDVR's last monitoring report was conducted in 2010. The issues identified in this report were addressed and bear no relationship to the goals and priorities identified in this plan outside of the Division continuing to expand its continuous improvement activities.

m. Order of Selection

Describe:

1. Whether the designated State unit will implement and order of selection. If so, describe:

A. The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.

IDVR is not currently in order of selection.

B. The justification for the order.

IDVR is not currently in order of selection.

C. The service and outcome goals.

IDVR is not currently in order of selection.

D. The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

IDVR is not currently in order of selection.

E. How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and

IDVR is not currently in order of selection.

2. If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

IDVR is not currently in order of selection.

n. Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds.

1. Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

IDVR received \$300,000 in Title VI, Part B funds in FFY 2020. these funds are made available for all Supported Employment cases statewide. IDVR focused Title VI, Part B funds on direct case service provision including job coaching. The Division has established a process to provide Youth Extended Services using these funds.

The Division anticipates that adult SE funds and youth SE funds will be exhausted annually and the Division will continue to provide these services under general Title I funds.

Since this population is by definition MSD they would also continue to receive services, even in the event that IDVR implemented an Order of Selection, unless Order were expanded to temporarily suspend services to part or all of the MSD population. No existing fiscal projection would indicate this action.

2. Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including:

A. the provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and

IDVR reserves 50 percent of Title VI Part B funds for the provision of Supported Employment and Extended Services to youth. IDVR's expenditures on SE services far outstrips the funds allocated under Title VI Part B. The Division does not anticipate any problems expending these funds as authorized.

The Division has developed policies to ensure that Youth Extended Services (YES) can be provided up to four years as needed for individuals under the age of 25 following the achievement of employment stability when comparable external sources of long-term extended support are unavailable. The Division will continue to support YES with Title I funds, as required by WIOA, and will continue to leverage other sources of extended services.

B. how the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.

IDVR utilizes the State's Extended Employment Services program as well as the Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services waivers for long term support. The Division will continue to work closely with HCBS to streamline our referral process and improve utilization of this external source of extended services funding.

o. State's Strategies

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

The Division's Statewide Assessment (j) outlines an array of potential priorities to expand and improve services to Idahoans with disabilities. Initial innovation and expansion activities under WIOA were focused primarily on establishing new and modified services to conform with the requirements of the regulations. While the Division will continue to expand these services in some areas, there will be an increasing focus on raising the quality of services to customers under all priorities listed under Goal 1 in section (l) of this plan.

IDVR will continue to maintain the two ongoing primary innovation activities, supporting the activities of both the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the State Independent Living Council (SILC). The SRC serves as IDVR's advisory council and together with the Division and the CSNA inform the goals, priorities, and strategies for agency.

Additionally, IDVR in PYs 2020-2021 will continue limited pilot projects under Pre-ETS while continuing to monitor and refine those programs now being offered at a statewide level. More detail on plans for improving services to students and youth can be found under part four of this section.

The Division will engage in a sustained campaign to improve frontline services to individuals with disabilities offered by Idaho's Community Rehabilitation Providers.

Following the creation of new policy on Supported Employment (SE) under WIOA to address regulatory changes pertinent to SE and an initial wave of internal staff training, the Division conducted multiple activities to collect input on services to individuals with MSD.

Expansion of service delivery options is an expressed need in more rural and remote areas of Idaho, while improvements were indicated for traditional CRP and Pre-ETS services including a need for more relevant community-based assessment options, stronger local area collaboration between IDVR and providers, and timeliness to CRP service initiation. More detail on plans for CRP improvement can be found under part five of this section.

2. How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis.

IDVR is committed to expanding the availability and provision of Assistive Technology. The Division has an ongoing partnership with the Idaho Assistive Technology Project (IATP) administered by the Center on Disabilities and Human Development at the University of Idaho. Through this partnership IATP provides continuing education and technical assistance to IDVR

personnel via face to face and distance methods. An IDVR staff member maintains representation on IATP's advisory board.

Current challenges to meet this need include the procurement of devices that students with disabilities have used through IDEA entitlements. The Division has an agreement as of FFY 2015, with the Idaho State Department of Education (SDE) outlining shared responsibilities and implementing a program which:

- Allows IDVR to purchase some AT devices at 50% of original cost from individual school districts, keeping familiar assistive technology in the hands of transitioning students.
- Shares responsibilities with the SDE where IDVR will purchase vocationally relevant AT for students with an IPE. Per WIOA guidance, the SDE retains responsibility for providing AT they have traditionally had the responsibility for.

IDVR anticipates updating this agreement for PY 2020.

Additional AT resources for staff training include the Idaho Training Clearinghouse, which hosts multiple resources and is funded by SDE's Special Education Division.

IDVR has provided counselors who serve deaf and hard of hearing customers with the AT needed to enhance communication.

3. The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

IDVR is trending toward a ratio of minority service rate to non-minority service rate of 1.00. Significant gains in service outreach, an emphasis on accurate coding of race and ethnicity status, and Pre-ETS expansion and outreach have raised the current (PY 2018) ratio to .961, up from .924 in PY 2017. Current estimates indicate a slight regression in this rate for PY 2019.

The identification and service estimates for minority populations in Idaho are derived from contrasting population estimates with internal agency data on applicants and plans developed for each minority population.

The Hispanic population is by far Idaho's largest minority group at 12.7 percent (2018 ACS Demographic and Housing 1-Year Estimate) and represents 9.1 percent of applicants and 8.6 percent of plans served by the Division in PY 2018 to date. This is contrast with the corresponding figures of a 12.0 percent population estimate and a 10.5 percent of applications in PY 2016. Additionally, over 16 percent of plans two years ago served individuals with Hispanic ethnicity. The Division is aware of the increasing gap in both applications and plans and has included an initiative in this plan to explore/expand Spanish language options for customers across Idaho.

Further analysis of outreach and service delivery by race is confounded by substantial error margins present in the ACS estimates due to low populations in remaining categories: While the

error margin presented for White alone in Idaho is around one-half of one percent, the error present in each of the remaining categories is substantial, ranging from 9.6 percent for Asian alone, and 52.5 percent for Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone. In other words, the margin of error for all racial minority categories could place any of these categories in over or underserved status. Disregarding this limitation, outreach efforts as illustrated by applicants suggest all racial minority categories are being overserved with the exception of ‘Asian alone’ which has a population estimate of 1.5 percent and an application rate in PY 2018 of 1.1 percent.

Idaho’s demographics are changing, and Idaho was the fastest growing state relative to population in the United States in 2017, experiencing 2.2% annual growth. Idaho is a major state for resettlement and has experienced a significant influx of refugees in Regions 3, 4, 7 and 8. In order to best understand the needs of this population, IDVR conducts joint staff training in conjunction with the Agency for New American’s. IDVR works maintains regular contact and outreach with staff at the International Rescue Committee refugee organization and all three resettlement agencies in the Treasure Valley and Magic Valley regions. The Division maintains contact with Family Medicine, a medical provider to newly arrived refugees in the in these regions to coordinate referrals.

Additionally, IDVR conducts ongoing outreach activities to meet the needs of the Spanish speaking population statewide. A number of these individuals engage in migrant seasonal farm work. The Division works collaboratively with IDOL, the Community Council of Idaho (a rural-centered, nonprofit serving Latinos in Idaho, and the Idaho Division of Hispanic Affairs to identify these individuals and processes to best conduct outreach activities.

The Division conducts various outreach activities to identify and involve individuals with disabilities from underserved backgrounds. These include but are not limited to:

- Monthly participation in the Amigo Round Table hosted by the Mexican Consulate
- Working with community based mental health programs to identify leads for potential outreach
- Continuing meetings with Boise State University’s Hispanic equivalency recruiter
- Meeting with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare’s bilingual staff as well as ongoing meetings with DHW’s Targeted Service Coordinators to identify potential referrals
- Participation in the multi-partner Refugee Employment Networking and Training group hosted by the Idaho Department of Labor
- Collaboration with the College of Southern Idaho Refugee Center for referral for refugees with disabilities needing VR services

IDVR also conducts tribal outreach, per agreement, in conjunction with 121 projects to the four tribes located in Idaho and the substantial American Indian population residing in the Treasure Valley.

IDVR has a representative on the Sho-Ban Job Fair and Hiring Event committee in partnership with Shoshone-Bannock VR, IDOL, tribal leadership and employers which connects prospective employees to employers. The last event drew 40 employers and over 500 job seekers.

IDVR has connected with the ESL coordinator at the College of Western Idaho who disseminates information to VR staff on free English language classes and training opportunities for customers.

IDVR regularly engages with qualified interpreters for a variety of languages to better serve VR clients with limited English proficiency.

Idaho currently has nine Community Rehabilitation Programs who hold 14(c) special wage certificates serving under 350 customers statewide. IDVR has developed a Career Counseling and Information & Referral process which is delivered multiple times per year at each certificate holder sites. As a part of obligations under 397, IDVR encourages individuals with MSD to engage with the Division if interested in Competitive Integrated Employment as a part of their informed choice.

4. The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services).

The expansion, provision, and evaluation of various Pre-ETS activities are ongoing. Continued collaboration with the SDE and LEAs alongside feedback from customers and parents/guardians when applicable are instrumental in better understanding which services should be continued, modified, or ended. Activities like the Transition Institute will bring these stakeholders together and allow for the collection of rich qualitative data to further inform improvements to these services.

The Transition Coordinator will also use the district plans that are created at the Institute to identify specific transition service needs of each district. This will allow VR to target districts who need intensive levels of support as priority districts. VR will also continue to provide targeted and universal support to districts who have identified lower levels of need.

Our Transition Coordinator also developed a transition needs assessment that was sent to every school district regarding transition and pre-employment transition services needs in order to target districts and expand VR services.

VR will track which Pre-ETS individual students received over the past couple years and the educational goal attainment and/or if the student has achieved his or her employment outcome.

Toward these ends, expected outcomes include an increase in student participation in Pre-ETS, an increase in the number of students participating in Pre-ETS based on student need, an increase in the number of students achieving his or her employment outcome.

IDVR is evaluating the following services and partnerships

- Post-secondary partnerships
- Summer paid work experience

- Local Education Agency partnerships
- Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind partnership
- Idaho Parent Unlimited partnership

IDVR would still like to develop a partnership with the state independent living centers.

5. If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.

The Division is committed to engaging in innovation and expansion activities designed to establish, develop and/or improve Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) across Idaho. Based on sustained demonstrated need highlighted in the past two Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessments and aligned with the joint goals of IDVR’s administration and IDVR’s State Rehabilitation Council the Division is currently exploring a number of potential initiatives to promote quality CRP outcomes including but not limited to:

- Promoting the Professionalization of CRP Staff:
 - An exploration of established training models used by CRPs/other DSUs to promote initial competence when providing services to people with disabilities
 - An exploration of continuing education requirements used by CRPs/other DSUs to promote career-long learning and quality outcomes
 - Formalization of initial and on-going education requirements for providers who want to serve IDVR customers
- Reconciling IDVR’s CRP Fee Schedule for WIOA Expectations:
 - Evaluation of rates for services to include an assessment of potential new competency and training requirements
 - Formalizing new rates for services based on enhanced education and competency requirements
- Clarifying Expectations/Information and Communication
 - Establishment of new requirements and guidance around IDVR expectations for individualized service provision, documentation, and more tailored/personalized community-based evaluations.
 - Explore a potential streamlining of requirements to serve rural and remote communities, allowing more potential providers with a lower barrier to entry in underserved/unserved areas.
 - Due to persistent confusion in the CSNA: Work with Extended Employment Services to help CRPs, customers, and parents/guardians understand Competitive Integrated Employment requirements of IDVR and how the programs intersect.
- Strengthen the Feedback Loop with CRPs:

- Work with partners to clarify agency expectations and requirements through continued development of the CRP Manual.
- Overhaul IDVR's CRP Monitoring Protocol to align with the requirements of WIOA and increase relevance to frontline staff and CRPs
- Continue to engage with CRP partners to address ongoing and emerging issues
- Explore performance accountability options following implementation of heightened requirements
- Targeted Evaluation of CRP Services for Effectiveness
 - Work to understand quality of assessments conducted by CRPs
 - Evaluate quality of assessment sites (where applicable) to the individualized personal/vocational needs of customer
 - Evaluate documentation of fading and stability

To further develop positive working relationships with Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) and to enhance service delivery for customers, IDVR participates in CRP association meetings or hosts alternate meetings when necessary.

IDVR is engaged in a structured program evaluation strategy to maintain and improve the quality of services provided to customers through community rehabilitation providers statewide.

IDVR generates annual CRP employment reports for each vendor who provided services in the past fiscal year. The tool provides information to customers in order to enhance informed choice while they are selecting a CRP. These reports contain aggregated data gathered from our case management system. Information provided includes number of cases served, employment outcomes, average hourly wage of consumers who exit the program successfully, average hours worked per week per consumer, average annual earnings per consumer, employer sponsored benefit rate of those successful closures, the top five occupational outcome categories, and the primary impairments of those served. Counselors provide this information in a manner the consumer can understand to help promote informed choice.

As a function of its consumer satisfaction survey, IDVR collects information on the satisfaction of consumers who received services from CRPs through an enhanced section of the instrument. The Division continues to explore options to improve this instrument.

6. Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

Vocational Rehabilitation programs are using a phased-in approach to set levels of performance for all primary performance indicators under this Combined State Plan. RSA-TAC-18-01 released January 18, 2018 provides guidance on the requirements for these indicators. No new guidance has been received to date; however, the Division does have baseline data for the Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) rate indicator and will enter into negotiations with RSA for PYs 2020 and 20201. Once an understanding of baselines emerge, IDVR will be well positioned to develop strategies to improve upon these baseline figures for all performance indicators.

The Department of Labor is a recipient of a Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant and is working with the core programs to develop policy and methods to automate data sharing to help all programs for performance reporting purposes.

While IDVR has an agreement to access Idaho's Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) in order to pull education related data elements that will allow IDVR to better understand what factors promote quality sustained competitive integrated employment, unfortunately, the SLDS education data received to this point is not current enough to use for MSG performance.

The Division has used the RSA Data Dashboards as an interim tool to better reporting under Section 116. The Division will continue to collect and analyze data to inform initial baseline thresholds to establish levels of performance to use for future negotiations with RSA. We expect to have more complete baseline data by the next plan submission and will then be able to articulate strategies for performance improvement based upon emerging trends and data.

7. Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

The WIOA Advisory group, in conjunction with Division and the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired has agreed that both IDVR and ICBVI will serve as lead agencies in addressing the continuing education and technical assistance needs of external workforce partners in best serving individuals with disabilities. IDVR and ICBVI will jointly sponsor a needs assessment of workforce partners regarding employment and disability, efforts to launch this initiative will occur in the next two-year plan cycle. This collaboration will include the establishment of stand-alone informational products, tailored face-to-face trainings, and informal consultation as needed.

The Division and ICBVI each conducted a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment which included surveys of core workforce partners.

IDVR's Administrator is an official, voting member of Idaho's Workforce Development Council (WDC), and IDVR's Administrator currently serves as the one-stop chair for the WDC. This appointment followed a major reorganization of the WDC which was mandated by the Governor's Executive Order.

Maximization of External Resource Utilization: IDVR in concert with other workforce partners and through the WIOA Advisory Group will be discussing the potential for common intake and appropriate referral in order to reduce duplication of services and maximize the array of services people with disabilities can leverage.

The Division will coordinate activities with mandatory One-Stop partners by sharing program contact information, eligibility criteria, and training on program services and mission. The Division will maximize services to individuals with disabilities through increased collaboration and integrated service delivery with various partners in One-Stop centers. Comprehensive information and training will be provided to outside organizations such as, the Department of Mental Health and Welfare's Division of Behavioral Health, School to Work Transition, American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Centers for Independent Living, and the Idaho Department of Correction. Participants will be encouraged to co-enroll in applicable

services at the local One-Stop to ensure participants can benefit from the full range of services available to them.

The Division has partnered with Live Better Idaho (LBI) (<https://www.livebetteridaho.org/>), a virtual portal which “connects service providers with Idahoans seeking those services.” This website, exclusively funded by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, is an ‘agency agnostic’ service which is offered to public and private providers of services and connects Idahoans in need to relevant services by matching individuals with programs they may qualify for. The tool is localized and customized, connecting users to services that are relevant and available in their local areas.

IDVR has created a presence on LBI to connect potential customers to Vocational Rehabilitation. The tool can help connect rural Idahoans to locally available resources, including VR, and expands the range of options youth can use to find appropriate employment programs.

IDVR staff have been trained on LBI and can use it with customers to explore other complimentary programs which may offer specific funding in areas of need, reducing direct IDVR expenditures, and program redundancy while increasing overall collaboration with partners external to WIOA.

Efforts continue to find an approach to identify co-enrollees in various program while services are still being conducted. Idaho does have a mechanism to identify co-enrollees, but this is currently a lagging mechanism and the state could increase efficiency and utility by identifying these individuals that are co-enrolled at intake or find a way to exchange this level of information in real time.

8. How the agency's strategies will be used to:

A. achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;

The Division has completed the latest Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) process which will be published in 2020. This CSNA has been used to inform our latest goals and priorities and to develop strategies to achieve the goals and priorities within IDVR’s 4-year work plan.

The agency’s goals and priorities have been outlined in section (l): state goals and priorities. This section (o) has addressed the program specific strategies to achieve the goals and priorities and related these to the CSNA and other data sources to support these arguments. This information in concert with the initiatives laid out in the combined plan operational elements iii.a precisely addresses how the State will approach these priorities.

B. support innovation and expansion activities; and

The Division’s strategies to support innovation and expansion activities have been outlined above in section (o)(1). The Division is particularly interested in designating funds for the purpose to improve the quality of CRP services to individuals with disabilities. The Division will evaluate the best approach for improvement, including input from the CRP community, and allocate resources to begin this innovative activity. It is expected that the Division will begin this process in PY2020 and continue efforts into PY2021.

These innovation activities are driven by WIOA regulatory changes and information derived from the past two CSNA's.

The expansion of Benefits Counseling services to individuals who are SSI/SSDI recipients:

The Division historically has used the services provided by Montana State University, Billings, Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA), however, this service is only for those individuals with disabilities who are employed. The Division is prioritizing the delivery of benefits counseling to customers who receive Social Security Disability benefits to promote better informed decisions regarding work, and to resolve any ambivalence/anxiety about losing benefits, as early in the VR process as possible. Few individuals are certified to deliver benefits counseling in Idaho. The Division plans to assess the number of current qualified benefit counselors (Community Work Incentives Coordinators (CWIC)) and develop a plan to increase the number to adequately address the need of individuals with disabilities served by the program. The Division intends to designate funds for this expansion activity in PYs 2020 and 2021.

The expansion of Customized Employment (CE) services through a pilot relaunch (Pilot 2.0):

IDVR engaged in an initial pilot program to launch CE services in three pilot sites across Idaho. The Division worked closely with WINTAC and our CE training provider, Griffin-Hammis Associates to train educators, CRP staff and IDVR staff including five-days of face-to-face instruction and distance and in-person technical assistance. Ultimately, the CRPs who participated in the training were unable to retain the staff trained in the pilot, and subsequently IDVR was left without the capacity to deliver CE or expand CE delivery statewide. Churn continues to be a significant issue for CRPs, and the Division is exploring potential changes to the structure of the pilot to include expanding the array of providers who are recognized as qualified CE providers. IDVR will continue efforts in the CE Community of Practice as well as continued engagement in the intensive technical assistance agreement with WINTAC. A CE Pilot 2.0 is planned to be developed and implemented in PYs 2020 and 2021. The Division intends to designate funds for this expansion activity in PYs 2020 and 2021.

C. overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

The 2020 IDVR CSNA reported that the Division has improved its outreach services to unserved, underserved and minority populations.

IDVR is trending toward a ratio of minority service rate to non-minority service rate of 1.00. Significant gains in service outreach, an emphasis on accurate coding of race and ethnicity status, and Pre-ETS expansion and outreach have raised the current (PY 2018) ratio to .961, up from .924 in PY 2017.

Staff recommendation to improve services contained in the CSNA indicated the next focus should be on transition age youth. Sections (o)(3) and (o)(4) of IDVR's program specific strategies (contained above) further elaborate on how the Division will address equitable access

and participation as it relates to this section, including coordination of outreach efforts with combined plan partners at IDOL and DEI.

p. Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals

Describe:

1. An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

A. Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

Goal 1 - Provide quality, relevant, individualized vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to maximize their career potential

Priority 1 - Expand, monitor, and improve pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities and similar services to youth.

The Division began collecting new baseline data for the number of students receiving Pre-ETS and has initial data in PY 2016 with the first full year of data in PY 2017 with 1180 students receiving at least one Pre-ETS activity. PY 2018 number dipped 19.7% to 947 students receiving at least one Pre-ETS activity. IDVR require more data to determine whether this is due to a regression to a true mean or is an indicator fewer service required due to an initial saturation of Pre-ETS services. Additionally, IDVR has experienced a Division wide decrease in overall applications for all services. This decrease could translate into an overall reduction in Pre-ETS cases across Idaho as well, or other yet to be determined factors. The Division will continue to monitor these indicators and will respond accordingly as the baseline numbers solidify.

The Division continues to evaluate and improve services to students. The transition coordinator, along with other transition staff, will develop a strategic plan fall 2019 to systematically move the Division forward with the delivery of Pre-ETS. This new strategic plan for Pre-ETS expansion and improvement is detailed in section L of this plan.

Priority 2 - Provide a comprehensive array of services to individuals with disabilities, including individuals with Most Significant Disabilities (MSD).

IDVR has engaged in a determined expansion of Supported Employment services, including a heightened focus on employment stability prior to the transition to long-term supports. As a result, the Division has seen the cost of SE cases increase year-over-year from \$1218 per case in PY 2016 to \$2,345 in PY 2018, an increase of 92% spent per SE case. This increase help promote initial stability through additional hours of Job Coaching for individuals to master the essential function of the position to employer satisfaction.

The Division has introduced stronger guidance, for staff and CRPs, on fading and appropriate reduction of support over time to ensure strategies are in place to either address current issues on the job or determine a base level of ongoing support required prior to transition to ongoing

support services. These efforts are ongoing, and the Division is currently working through public comment to enhance this guidance in a new iteration of the IDVR's CRP Manual.

Additionally, the Division has completed phase one of its Customized Employment pilot. The three-site pilot intended to determine appropriate rate, capacity and inform policy development around launch CE statewide. While CE can be offered to SE, components of CE are valuable to MSD as well. The initial phase of the pilot illustrated significant challenges to provider turnover and sustainable training to achieve fidelity to the CE model IDVR has selected. The Division is currently structuring phase two of the pilot to address challenges experienced in phase one. The Division anticipates a relaunch of phase two sometime in PY 2020.

The Division has received intensive TA from WINTAC and is currently engaged in WINTAC's Community of Practice (CoP) on both Supported and Customized Employment.

The Division has included Benefits Planning on its Strategic Plan for PY 2019 but has pushed this initiative to PY 2020. Benefits Planning has been identified as a priority by Idaho's State Rehabilitation Council.

Youth Extended Services has been established as a service category and is now available in cases where no alternative external source of extended services is available.

Priority 3 - Hire and retain qualified staff to deliver quality vocational rehabilitation services.

IDVR has accomplished several initiatives to increase retention and attract new hires for counselor and management level positions, including:

- Marketing materials update to highlight VR career path, meaningful work, and benefits offered to State Employees
- Increased outreach to universities, CRCC, and through attendance at NCRE to expand candidate reach
- Streamlined the recruitment process and updated job postings to make them more jobseeker focused
- Created internship program to build talent pipeline and continue collaboration with neighboring universities
- Updated CSPD policy to offer financial support to employees working towards their VR credentials
- Created permanent Assistant Regional Manager (ARM) positions to support the development of new staff, increase potential for career growth, and for succession planning purposes
- Continuously supporting managers and their employees in performance management process
- Restructured onboarding processes to engage new hires, standardize training and foster a positive experience for new employees

- Partner with IDVR VRC Trainer to increase and align skill set of agency personnel
- Updated pay structure for all Division position classifications to hire at the minimum of 80% policy rate

Priority 4 - Improve usage of Labor Market Information/Career Pathways to inform customer career choice.

IDVR engaged with Career Index Plus and the Idaho Department of Labor in various ways:

Career Index Plus training was offered to frontline staff statewide to provide additional options for staff when exploring LMI with customers. The Idaho Department of Labor came to IDVR's Inservice to provide training on local labor markets and how to use the tools provided by IDOL including accessing local labor economists to better understand local area conditions. Training on Comprehensive Assessment incorporating local labor market data was emphasized in a major statewide training on quality case documentation, an area of focus for PY 2018.

The Division included an evaluation of LMI present in Comprehensive Assessments in its 2019 Case File Review Season and will be promoting greater utilization of local (or anticipated) labor market for the vocational goal of choice. Additionally, the Division imposed a ban on the utilization of generic 'all other service workers' type goals outside of Pre-ETS cases (where a vague vocational goal is allowable while student/youth career exploration solidifies).

Goal 2 - Improve VR program efficiency through continuous quality improvement activities

Priority 1 - Meet or exceed negotiated targets on Primary Performance Indicators 1-5 established by the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Initial efforts to utilize targets first require the establishment of data agreements and subsequent baseline data. IDVR, through an initial ad-hoc data agreement, was able to secure in-state wage data through IDOL, however only aggregate out-of-state data were available through IDOL's WRIS-2 due to constraints imposed by the agreement. As of September 2019, Idaho's core program partners have all signed on to the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) and will now be able to gather additional out-of-state data from other SWIS states. IDVR is well positioned to enter target negotiation with RSA. It is worth noting that there are significant out-of-state overlaps with local labor markets, particularly in north Idaho with estimates that approach 12% out-of-state placement.

IDOL secured a Workforce Data Quality Initiative WDQI grant from US DOL with expressed support from the Division. IDVR is working with the WDQI lead and other core WIOA programs to leverage the WDQI resources to improve and automate the exchange of secure co-enrollment data and other critical shared elements of importance to the group. As a result of efforts identified in the WDQI, core programs should realize more efficient and secure data exchange of required WIOA data elements needed by multiple core partners.

Outcomes of Primary Performance Indicators are preliminary. Currently complete data is only available for Measurable Skill Gains, while employment/wage data continues to come online.

A critical focus of the new Case File Review Protocol was the verification of documentation of educational goals. Preliminary findings indicate that while Division staff are doing an exceptional job of collecting educational verification, we are challenged with entering MSGs in all cases for performance reporting purposes. The Division currently has an understanding of areas it can improve on from PY 2018 performance. The Division will champion an effort to report more complete MSG data in PY 2019. The Division will also use information gained in the review of PY 2018 performance to establish and improve an MSG anomalies/data validation check to better promote field entry of educational goals where they are currently lacking. Further identification of core performance elements for improvement are dependent on the future exchange of this data to solidify baselines.

Priority 2 - Revise IDVR's Customer Satisfaction Survey in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council to increase the response rate, retention rate, and overall satisfaction rate.

IDVR has completely revamped the Customer Satisfaction Survey based on feedback from Idaho's SRC and SRC Survey Subcommittee. As a result, the Division realized major gains in completion rates (from 40 to 98 percent) and response rates (from five to 15 percent). Moving forward, the Division will focus on an increase in satisfaction and maintain a focus on keeping a solid response rate.

Regarding satisfaction, the foundational questions have been changed, and data are not directly comparable. However, the Division has seen a seven percent drop in 'satisfaction' with the change in language, and a change in method in calculating overall satisfaction (87 percent to 80 percent satisfied or very satisfied). Additional variance in this in this rate may be explained by a modification of the Division's Financial Participation Agreement, which coincided with the change in CSS survey and substantially increased customer financial involvement in their plans, and general impacts of WIOA implementation.

Priority 3 - Maximize the utilization of comparable benefits.

Preliminary attention has been given to this priority and understanding comparable benefit utilization and documentation was a focus of IDVR's 2019 Case File Review. Emerging data suggests a need to further information and communication activities to not only maximize the utilization of comparable benefits and services, but also to better document these benefits on the plan when they are used.

IDVR is increasing appropriate referral to American Job Center Network Partners in local areas: IDVR's administrator is Idaho's Workforce Development Council One-Stop chairperson, and in this capacity has increased local area engagement between WIOA combined plan partners and other stakeholders. This is accomplished via multiple monthly in-person meetings to facilitate better understanding of programs and increase utilization of available resources and expertise. This should have an impact on volume and validity of referrals to comparable services and resources and a corresponding increase in co-enrollment between combined plan partners.

The Division has also issued recent guidance clarifying the scope of comparable benefits and included procedures for better documenting comparable benefits on the IPE.

IDVR is using RSA's data dashboards as a part of its data validation strategy. In this analysis the Division has uncovered a flaw in how these are represented in the report through the Aware case management system. IDVR is working hand-in-hand with Aware to better understand and rectify this reporting error.

Priority 4 - Increase IDVR integration with the workforce development system.

The IDVR Administrator is the Workforce Development Council (WDC) One-Stop Committee Chair. The Committee has prioritized numerous activities since the last State Plan, including:

- Formalizing Idaho's One-Stop/American Job Center structure: two comprehensive centers (Idaho Falls and Lewiston), designating affiliate sites, and network partners.
- Negotiating a cost-sharing agreement.
- Conducting both physical and programmatic accessibility of comprehensive, affiliate, and network partner sites.
- Advancing data sharing to obtain co-enrollment information.

Priority 5 - Evaluate IDVR assessment expenditures.

While the evaluation of assessment expenditures remains a priority for the agency, progress on this priority was minimal this PY.

Priority 6 - Revise internal case review process to align with WIOA requirements, and inform the continuous quality improvement cycle.

Priority 6 has been met with a complete revision of the internal case review process which now aligns with RSA's Internal Control and data validation requirements and is periodically informed by the MTAG and emerging and existing agency priorities and progress. An annual review season pilot of this protocol is focused on high risk areas as identified by compliance objectives, agency personnel, CSNA, SRC and other sources. Additionally, more complex or ad hoc topics will be addressed through a series of targeted reviews which will rotate based on administration prioritization.

The result of the revision has been a substantial increase in meaningful information that can be easily translated into action for program improvement. Emerging data from the 2019 case file review season indicated numerous areas for immediate training and improvement statewide, and at a regional level. As a result, this protocol will be institutionalized and completed annually as a part of addressing IDVR's overall internal control monitoring requirements. The Planning and Evaluation unit will continue to iterate to improve on this process, but incremental improvements can now be focused on versus the transformational system overhaul that is now complete.

Priority 7 - Collaborate with Community Rehabilitation Program partners to improve the quality of services.

IDVR is in the middle of a transformational change in how we communicate with and work with our Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP). Fundamental to these changes was the

establishment of a formalized CRP Manual articulating and clarifying expectations and requirements around billing, service delivery, monitoring, pilot CRP projects, rural and underserved areas and frequently asked questions. The Division is in the middle of a revision phase and is currently collecting comment from internal field staff and CRPs to make incremental improvements to the guide and will continue to do so over time.

The Division partnered with three Idaho CRPs to launch phase one of the Customized Employment pilot. While ultimately unsuccessful, the pilot indicated many potential changes for improvement in phase two and identified areas for clarification in expectations. The second phase is being developed with input from national technical assistance centers, Idaho pilot CRPs and field staff who were a part of the original training series. The second pilot phase is expected to launch in PY 2020.

Customer Satisfaction Survey results for CRP services (including assessment services) are particularly low and indicate a strong need to elevate this priority in the coming PY.

IDVR realizes a need to further enhance collaboration with CRPs to work on a variety of services from assessment, to job development and placement and to include supported and customized employment. Data from the 2016 CSNA and preliminary results from the 2019-2020 CSNA (in process) strongly indicate a need to utilize Innovation and Expansion funds to elevate the quality of CRPs in the coming state plan. This will be a primary emphasis for the Division in this plan.

Priority 8 - Evaluate Customer Access to Services

Priority 8 was de-emphasized following a risk assessment and prioritization activity held with frontline management staff and members of the SRC. This element was a product of a prior SRC priority, but after a shift in member composition the priorities changed.

Goal 3 - Meet the needs of Idaho businesses

Priority 1 - IDVR to be recognized by the business community as the disability experts in the workforce system.

The Business Relations Liaison oversees the coordination of employer related outreach efforts within the Division and to coordinate employer contact under the aegis of WIOA through partnerships with Titles I-IV and other combined state plan partners.

In 2017 the Business Engagement Team (BET) was created comprised of at least one-to-two IDVR staff in each regional office and activities of the BET are directed by the Business Relations Liaison. Regional Management representation is strong on the team, with three of eight RMs participating in an advisory role. The BET has evolved a mission statement, “To intentionally create and maintain long term partnerships with businesses for mutually beneficial outcomes for employers and job seekers with disabilities”.

Following the creation of an initial charter, sponsored by Division administration, the BET has engaged in a number of preliminary activities, including the creation of a mandatory “Business Basics” online training for all staff, a method for tracking business outreach activities through our internal case management system, updates to IDVR’s external business relations portal, and development of marketing materials for business outreach and education.

Activities for the BET are partly informed by an annual survey. This survey helps the Business Relations Liaison prioritize activities based on input from the field. The latest survey indicated high perceived needs for Disability Awareness training (indicated by 68 percent of BET staff as a need), Accommodations and Assistive Technology (65 percent), and Hiring Incentives for Employers (68 percent). Additionally, the BET is now active in most of the chambers of commerce across Idaho including representation in each region of IDVR.

A toolbox for members of the BET has now been established and is growing. The toolbox features resources BET and other IDVR staff can use to promote positive employer engagement. There are tools for staff as well as a growing number of tools designed for employers including a new initiative to create a training for employers around disability etiquette. This group will be meeting early in 2020 to draft a formal strategic plan and further refine and articulate goals, strategies, priorities and staff responsibilities under the team. Expanding outreach to employers for students and youth in transition is a primary consideration for the coming year for the BET with a business engagement transition pilot for IDVR Region 1 launching in 2020.

As a part of the BET activities in PY 2018, the team led a presentation at IDVR's annual all-staff Inservice to help explain how they serve as regional resources to promote positive business engagement opportunities.

The unit, while new, has engaged in two in-depth activities with major Idaho corporations (WinCo and HP). While talks with WinCo are still preliminary, the HP Spectrum Success Program is a direct result of sustained engagement and partnership with HP and would not have been possible without the help of Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Microsoft who had engaged in some trailblazing efforts matching individuals with autism and STEM jobs. The willingness of these partners to provide technical assistance and expertise were instrumental in the program's success and as a result HP is engaging in a second cohort with IDVR beginning in early 2020.

IDVR will continue to coordinate business outreach efforts with the Idaho Department of Labor, and their business outreach team which serves as the central point of contact for WIOA coordinated business outreach activities.

IDVR's Business Relations Liaison is engaged with the National Employment Team (the NET) and attends the national conference in addition to receiving regular updates, conference calls provided through a NET community of practice. IDVR also has a working group through federal Region X (WA, OR, AK, ID) where business engagement leads from each state share best practices and approaches.

IDVR has traditionally engaged in the creation of "VR Success Stories" to showcase strong annual placements. The Business Relations Liaison and the BET have worked to overhaul, expand, and professionalize these segments and will now producing multiple success stories per Region, with two being selected for a full video production which showcases the customer and employer's success with these placements.

B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Factors that impeded the achievement of goals and priorities are discussed within the narrative of the preceding section (p)(1)(A) under their respective goals and priorities.

2. An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

A. Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

The Division would anticipate serving approximately 128 individuals with the \$300,000 available in the SE Supplemental grant at an average cost of \$2,346.

Goal: To promote quality SE services through stability as demonstrated through higher 2nd and 4th quarter employment rates for customers who received SE services.

Per customer expenditures for SE cases are up 92% as the Division places more support behind achieving quality, long term stable SE outcomes.

IDVR provides supported employment services for eligible customers with the most significant disabilities. IDVR's Title VI, Part B funds have not traditionally covered all necessary expenditures associated with a supported employment strategy for IDVR customers. The Division has and will continue to supplement Title VI, Part B funds when needed with Title I grant funds.

It should also be noted that WIOA has a new financial requirement for Title VI, Part B funds. IDVR is required to set aside 50% of these funds for service provision to youth with disabilities and provide a 10% state match to these funds. The Division anticipates it will spend these funds and more in the coming year on students and youth.

B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The current labor market and fiscal conditions make recruitment and retention significant challenges for many of Idaho's Community Rehabilitation Programs. In this PY, two major CRPs have shuttered their programs as a result of fiscal conditions, reported difficulties in staffing, and a decline in referrals. Record sustained unemployment across Idaho has created an environment where CRP staff can often receive nominal wage increases to work entry level positions in their local labor markets. CRPs are in many cases unable to compete for these staff.

3. The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

IDVR is continuing to gather baseline data from which to determine whether performance is degrading, maintaining or improving per section 116 standards. Once an understanding of these baselines emerge, IDVR will be well positioned to develop strategies to improve upon these baseline figures. IDVR currently has is Measurable Skill Gains with a rate of 35.3% for the 915 gains reported. IDVR also has preliminary median earnings of 3,733.93 reported in PY 2018.

The Division is hesitant to rely strongly on the current MSG rate as recent file reviews have illustrated there is more work to be done before relying on this rate as a baseline.

The Division continues working with core partner agencies to establish the open exchange of information which surround these performance measures and will be positioned to predict and establish baselines for negotiation with RSA based upon this data. However, since the core group of people continues to fundamentally shift as we operationalize WIOA requirements, the error introduced into these predictions is unknown, but is diminishing over time.

This plan is filed at a transitional period for standards and indicators in vocational rehabilitation.

Section 116 of WIOA establishes six new performance indicators to align these measures across numerous programs in the state. IDVR has not traditionally reported these measures as defined. This in concert with fundamental changes in Pre-ETS service provision further confound the Division's ability to accurately forecast targets for negotiated performance. Furthermore, many of these data elements remain undefined. That said, IDVR has made progress toward establishing baseline targets for a number of these indicators. Current data sharing agreements are not adequate to gather the level of information necessary to establish baseline targets. The Division is currently working on a new array of agreements to ensure the requirements of partner agencies are met.

4. How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

IDVR provided funding support for the State Rehabilitation Council expenditures including travel, lodging, supplies, meeting room rentals, interpreters when necessary, facilitation services.

Cost: \$22,414

IDVR funds the State Independent Living Council (SILC) for the purpose of Innovation and Expansion activities. Title I funds reserved for the SILC were used to support personnel and functions necessary for the operation of the SILC.

Cost: \$134,379

q. Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services.

Include the following:

1. The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) provides the full scope of Supported Employment Services (SE) to those Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) eligible customers with the most significant disabilities, who require extended services to maintain employment.

Supported Employment Services include the following:

Time limited services needed to include job coaching and communication with the employers, to support training while the individual is employed. Continued funding of SE cases is contingent

upon progress toward learning the essential functions of the job and/or fading hours of ongoing support to the level of employer satisfaction immediately prior to the assessment of initial stability.

Any other service that would be identified as requisite to the targeted supported employment outcome after placement ahead of transfer to externally funded ongoing support services.

SE may also include Customized Employment elements, after placement.

Youth Extended Services (YES) are available for qualifying youth in the absence of other ongoing support services available in the community.

Each customer's IPE describes the timing of the transition into extended services, which is to be provided by the long-term support provider following the termination of time-limited services by IDVR.

Fifty percent of the Title VI-B (Supported Employment) grant will be reserved for youth with the most significant disabilities; the Division will set aside a 10% non-federal matching fund to meet the requirement of §363.23. For FFY 2018 this amount will be \$15,000 (Title VI-B Youth). The corresponding adult SE grant does not require a set aside.

Supported Employment Services are delivered by CRPs throughout the State of Idaho. IDVR's CRP quality assurance process is detailed in section (o)(5) of this plan.

2. The timing of transition to extended services.

WIOA extended the SE time period from 18 to 24 months. The Division has created protocols for and has made Youth Extended Services (YES) available when needed as required by WIOA. As Idaho has external funders of ongoing support services through multiple avenues, the Division does not currently have to expend YES funds.

Extended services may be provided to youth with MSD for a period not to exceed four years with the funds reserved under §363.22. SE services for adults shall not exceed 24 months, unless an exception is granted. The Division requires a third-party commitment to designate a long-term support provider. Since 2004, the Extended Employment Services (EES) program has been housed under IDVR and along with Medicaid are the two providers of long-term funding for extended services in Idaho. A supported employment participant may only be transitioned to long term support based on an assessment of rehabilitation goal achievement and job stability. Periodic monitoring occurs to ensure that each customer receiving SE services is making satisfactory progress, including twice-monthly requirements to document progress toward these goals.